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# A HISTORY OF THE
# NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS
# AND COUNTRY

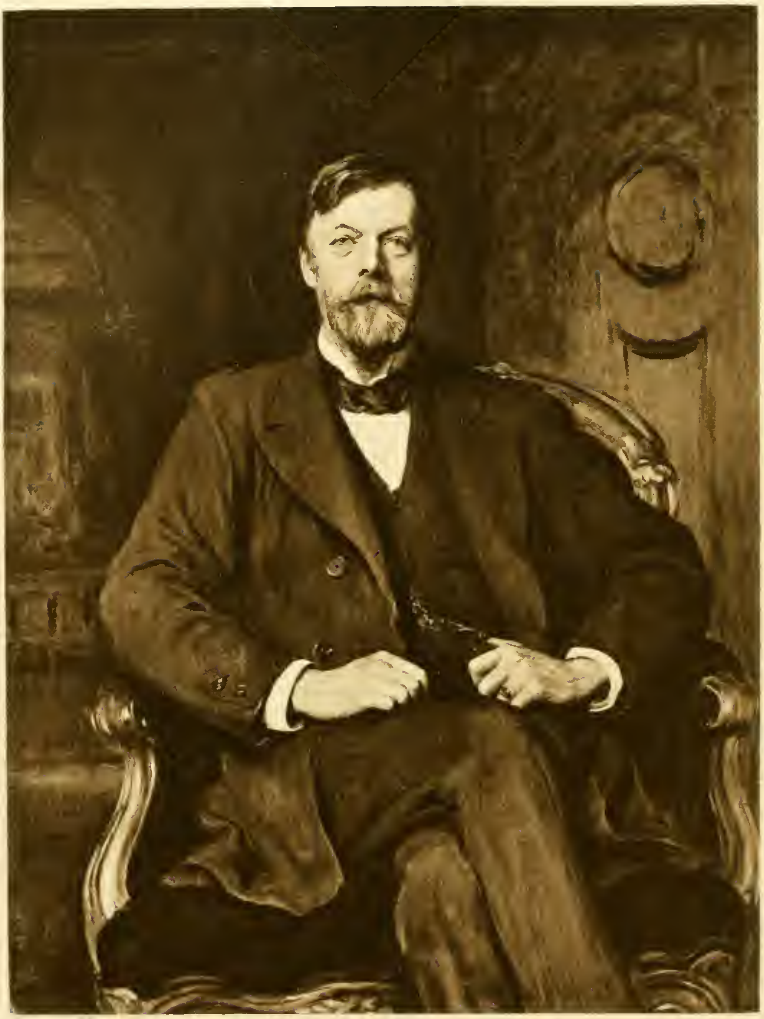

Photo by Harrison

The 4th Duke of Sutherland K.G

From the Presentation Portrait by H. Herkomer, R.A

By permission of G. T. Bagguley

# A HISTORY

OF THE

# NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS AND COUNTRY

## 1825 TO 1902

BY

C. J. BLAGG

*WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS*

LONDON
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LIMITED
St. Dunstan's House
Fetter Lane, Fleet Street, E.C.
1902

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WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

To

THE MOST NOBLE CROMARTIE,
FOURTH DUKE OF SUTHERLAND, K.G.,

THIS BOOK

IS DEDICATED WITH MUCH RESPECT
BY
THE AUTHOR.

# PREFACE.

A PREFACE generally appears to consist mainly of apologies and acknowledgments, and I do not think that mine will be an exception to the general rule. In the first place, I wish to offer a sincere apology for the shortcomings in this volume, of which I am only too well aware. I make no claim to literary ability, and can only plead that, having been quite unexpectedly honoured by the Duke of Sutherland's request to undertake the history of the North Staffordshire Hunt, I have done my best to write an accurate account, and for the rest must throw myself on the kind indulgence of my readers. Two merits of a negative sort I think I may perhaps fairly claim: I have not run into two volumes, and I have "set down naught in malice."

I have to thank many friends for kind help and information. First and foremost, my best thanks are due to His Grace the Duke of Sutherland, for his cordial support in every way, and for permission to reproduce here some of the historic pictures and family portraits at Trentham; to the Duke's private secretary and joint honorary secretary to the Hunt, Mr. Alexander Simpson, for the loan of the huntsman's diaries, the Hunt minute-books, and for constant information and help which have been simply invaluable; to Mr. Fitzherbert Brockholes, for allowing me to incorporate with my own manuscript a considerable portion of his excellent articles on the early history of the Hunt which were printed in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* in 1891, and for the loan of diaries and note-books; to Mr. Reginald N. Wood, for much interesting matter connected with the Hunt and its management, which he has kindly supplied for use in this volume; to Lady Manningham-Buller and Miss Davenport, and to Mrs. Reginald Manningham-Buller, for the loan of photographs and for information connected with the Davenport mastership and the Buller family; to Lord Ronald Gower, for permitting me to quote freely from his interesting "Reminiscences;" to Mr. C. W. Wicksted, for valuable information touching the early history of the Hunt from 1825 to 1836; to the Earl of Lichfield, for kindly supplying me with extracts from the diaries of his ancestor, the first Earl of Lichfield, giving interesting particulars of the hunting near Shugborough in the early part of the nineteenth century; to Mrs. McVitie of Edinburgh (better known in the eighties as Miss Thompson), for some helpful newspaper extracts and other kind help; to Mr. G. T. Bagguley, the librarian at Trentham, and the owner of the copyright of the Herkomer portrait of the present Duke of Sutherland, for permission to reproduce that picture, and for other valuable assistance; to the proprietors and editors of the *Staffordshire Advertiser* and the *Field*, for most kindly allowing me to quote freely a number of accounts of runs and other interesting articles which have appeared in their columns from time to time, and especially to the *Staffordshire Advertiser* for ready and cordial help in other ways;—to each and all of the above named I tender my grateful thanks, and also to many friends and correspondents, almost too numerous to particularize, who have kindly answered inquiries, and from time to time given me material information for the purposes of this work. A word of acknowledgment is due to Messrs. Harrison and Son, of Newcastle, for the excellent photographs executed by them and reproduced in this volume, and to Messrs. Henry Graves and Co., of Pall Mall, for kindly allowing the reproduction of the portrait of Mr. Wicksted.

CHARLES J. BLAGG.

GREENHILL, CHEADLE, STAFFORDSHIRE,
*November*, 1902.

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# ERRATA.

Page 62, line 25, *for* "Mr. Edward Heathcote" *read* "Mr. Edwards-Heathcote."

„ 130, line 4, *for* "Lady Millicent Fanny St. Clare Erskine" *read* "Lady Millicent Fanny St. Clair Erskine."

THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

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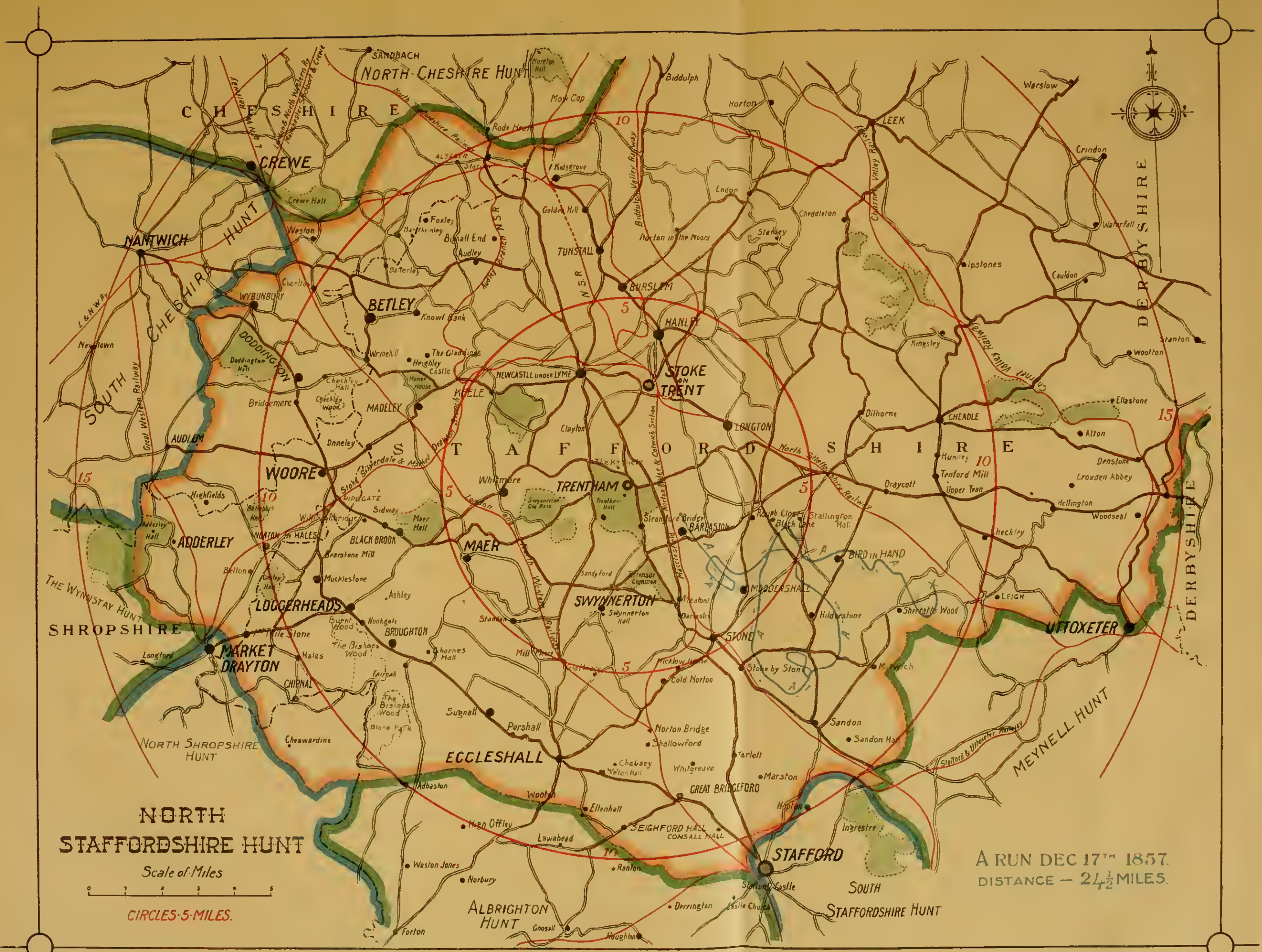

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT

Scale of Miles

CIRCLES 5 MILES.

A RUN DEC 17TH 1857.
DISTANCE — 24½ MILES.

0 1 2 3 4 5
CHESHIRE
STAFFORDSHIRE
SHROPSHIRE
DERBYSHIRE
NORTH CHESHIRE HUNT
SOUTH CHESHIRE HUNT
THE WYNNSTAY HUNT
NORTH SHROPSHIRE HUNT
ALBRIGHTON HUNT
SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT
MEYNELL HUNT
DODDINGTON
SANDBACH
CREWE
Crewe Hall
NANTWICH
WYBUNBURY
Weston
Chorlton
Newtown
AUDLEM
BETLEY
Knowl Bank
Wrinehill
Doddington Hall
Checkley Hall
Checkley Wood
Bridgemere
MADELEY
KEELE
NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME
WOORE
Onneley
Highfields
ADDERLEY
Adderley Hall
Betton
NORTON IN HALES
Pipe Gate
Sidway
Maer Hall
BLACK BROOK
Bearstone Mill
Mucklestone
Ashley
LOGGERHEADS
Burnt Wood
Hookgate
BROUGHTON
The Bishops Wood
MARKET DRAYTON
Longford
Hales
CHIPNAL
Fairoak
Blore Park
Cheswardine
Sugnall
Pershall
ECCLESHALL
Adbaston
Wootton
High Offley
Lawnhead
Weston Jones
Norbury
Forton
Gnosall
Haughton
Ellenhall
SEIGHFORD HALL
CONSALL HALL
Ranton
Derrington
STAFFORD
Stafford Castle
Castle Church
Ingestre
Hopton
Marston
Yarlett
Whitgreave
GREAT BRIDGEFORD
Chebsey
Walton Hall
Shallowford
Norton Bridge
Cold Norton
Sandon
Sandon Hall
Stoke by Stone
STONE
Darlaston
Millmeece
Standon
Chorlton
SWYNNERTON
Swynnerton Hall
Sandyford
Tittensor Common
MAER
Whitmore
Clayton
TRENTHAM
Trentham Hall
Stone Ford Bridge
BARLASTON
MODDERSHALL
Hilderstone
BIRD IN HAND
Rough Close
Stallington Hall
Blake Lake
Shercaffs Wood
Milwich
LONGTON
STOKE ON TRENT
HANLEY
BURSLEM
TUNSTALL
Golden Hill
Kidsgrove
Mow Cop
Rode Heath
ALSAGER
Moreton Hall
Biddulph
Norton in the Moors
Endon
Horton
Stanley
Cheddleton
LEEK
Warslow
Crindon
Waterfall
Ipstones
Cauldon
Kingsley
Stanton
Wootton
Ellastone
CHEADLE
Dilhorne
Alton
Denstone
Croxden Abbey
Hollington
Woodseal
Hunley
Tenford Mill
Upper Tean
Draycott
Checkley
LEIGH
UTTOXETER
Foxley
Barthomley
Bignall End
Audley
Batterley
The Gladdings
Heighley Castle
Manor House
N.S.R.
North Staffordshire Railway
Churnet Valley Railway
Biddulph Valley Railway
Audley Branch N.S.R.
Crewe & North Western Ry
L & N W Ry
Great Western Railway
Stoke Silverdale & Market Drayton Branch
London and North Western Railway
Norton Bridge & Colwich Section
Stafford & Uttoxeter Railway
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10
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SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON AND COMPANY LTD.

# THE
# NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

## CHAPTER I.

EARLY ANNALS OF FOX-HUNTING IN NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE—MR. WICKSTED'S MASTERSHIP—HODGSON AND WICKSTED VERSES—WILL WELLS—MR. DAVENPORT'S MASTERSHIP—JOE MAIDEN.

We are told, on high classical authority, that there were brave men before Agamemnon, who were lost to fame for want of an inspired bard to chronicle their prowess.

In the same way, there can be little doubt that North Staffordshire produced many gallant fox-hunters in the prehistoric times before the days when Mr. Wicksted first, and Mr. Davenport afterwards, came to the front; but, unfortunately, those early sportsmen are not only unsung by the Warburtons and Whyte-Melvilles of their day, but, by some unlucky fate, have also escaped the notice of any known contemporary prose writer on sport, so that there is only a tradition, mainly oral, that about a hundred years ago, or more, the then Lord Talbot of Ingestre for a few years hunted a portion of what is now the North Stafford country, chiefly in the neighbourhood of Sandon and Seighford; and that, in a somewhat casual and intermittent style, a portion of the same country was afterwards hunted by sundry scratch packs in the early part of the nineteenth century. Lord Vernon appears to have succeeded Lord Talbot for some years after the latter gave up his hounds in 1793, but Lord Vernon's hounds only hunted a small portion of the North Stafford country, and were sold and dispersed in 1812.

It is on record that the renowned "Jack Mytton" kept a pack of hounds about this time at Ivetsey Bank, and for two or three seasons hunted the Seighford and Eccleshall side of the present North Stafford country. We believe there is still a kennel at Seighford, known as Jack Mytton's kennel.

In 1820 we hear of a pack called the Moorland Foxhounds, hunting two days a week in the neighbourhood of Leek, Biddulph, and Draycot; but this pack had only an ephemeral existence, and shortly afterwards we find another pack, known as the Pottery Hounds, in possession of something like the same district. They were in reality harriers, but evidently they used to indulge in a bagged fox now and again. The huntsman was named Peach, the kennels were at Lane End (now better known as Longton), and the hunt was under the management of Mr. Hill, of Stallington Hall, great grandfather of the present Sir Hill Child, Bart. Hanley Market-place was the usual meet when a fox was to be turned out. Mr. Tom Broade and his son Mr. Philip Broade, Mr. Allen Fenton, and Mr. John Hales were names well known with these hounds.

The following quaint account of a meet of these hounds at Chell in February, 1825, appears in the pages of the *Sporting and Fancy Gazette* for March, 1825 :—

> "The fox being turned out, the energetic 'Yoix, yoix, tally-ho!' of Mr. Peach gave the signal for starting. Reynard went with the greatest velocity down to Whitfield, afterwards up to the Greenaway Bank; he took the Moorland country to the left of Knypersley and Biddulph, along the meadows to Rudyard vale, and passed to the vicinity of Macclesfield; here he made a sweep and turned back until he came to that beautiful sheet of water, Horton Reservoir, and, being hard pressed by the dogs, he took the water and was killed in the middle of the pool, after an arduous chase of two hours and a half through one of the most romantic, yet worst hunting countries in Staffordshire."

There is a tradition that in the course of this run two gentlemen swam the reservoir. The Pottery Hounds were given up about 1827.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, the Woore country seems to have been only hunted as an outlying part of the Cheshire. It appears, however, to have already begun to earn a reputation for carrying a good scent and furnishing stout foxes, as is shown by the following extract from a letter written by Mr. J. B. Glegg, of Withington Hall, to Sir Harry Mainwaring:—

> "In the early days of the Nantwich country, from 1805 onwards, there was great sport from Ravenmoor to the hills. Leech was constantly on them, and we hardly ever failed in the Admiral's cover and going direct as a line over that fine country. I don't ever recollect to have seen finer sport constantly than at that time and over that country. The hounds then hunted the Woore country, and had a wonderful run from Buerton Gorse, went through Oakley Park (Sir J. Chetwode's), crossed the Drayton road below the Loggerheads, just skirted the Burnt Woods, left the Bishop's Woods on the left, Hales on the left, right on through the Small Woods at Knighton, and killed at Batchacre Park (Mr. Whitworth's, in Shropshire), eighteen miles as the crow flies, in an hour and forty-five minutes. It was an extraordinarily fine run, and to within these few years that fox's pad was on the stable-door here."

After having been hunted over more or less intermittently for some years, in 1822 Mr. William Hay, of Dunse Castle, near Berwick-upon-Tweed, who was evidently an ardent fox-hunter, undertook the Woore country, which is said to have been hunted previously by Sir Thomas Mostyn. Mr. Hay had commenced his fox-hunting career by hunting the Holderness country. During his term of management (1822–25) the kennels were at Market Drayton, and, besides the Woore country, he used to meet regularly at Seighford, Sugnall, the Loggerheads, and Keele. In 1825 Mr. Hay migrated with his pack to Warwickshire, and it may be of interest to many who have had pleasant experiences of Will Boxall, for many years the popular first whip,* of the North Stafford Hounds, to learn that Mr. Hay's first whip in Warwickshire was also a Will Boxall,† and is alluded to in high terms by "Nimrod." When Mr. Hay gave up the Woore country, it was taken by Mr.

---

* And now the huntsman.

† Grandfather of the present North Staffordshire huntsman.

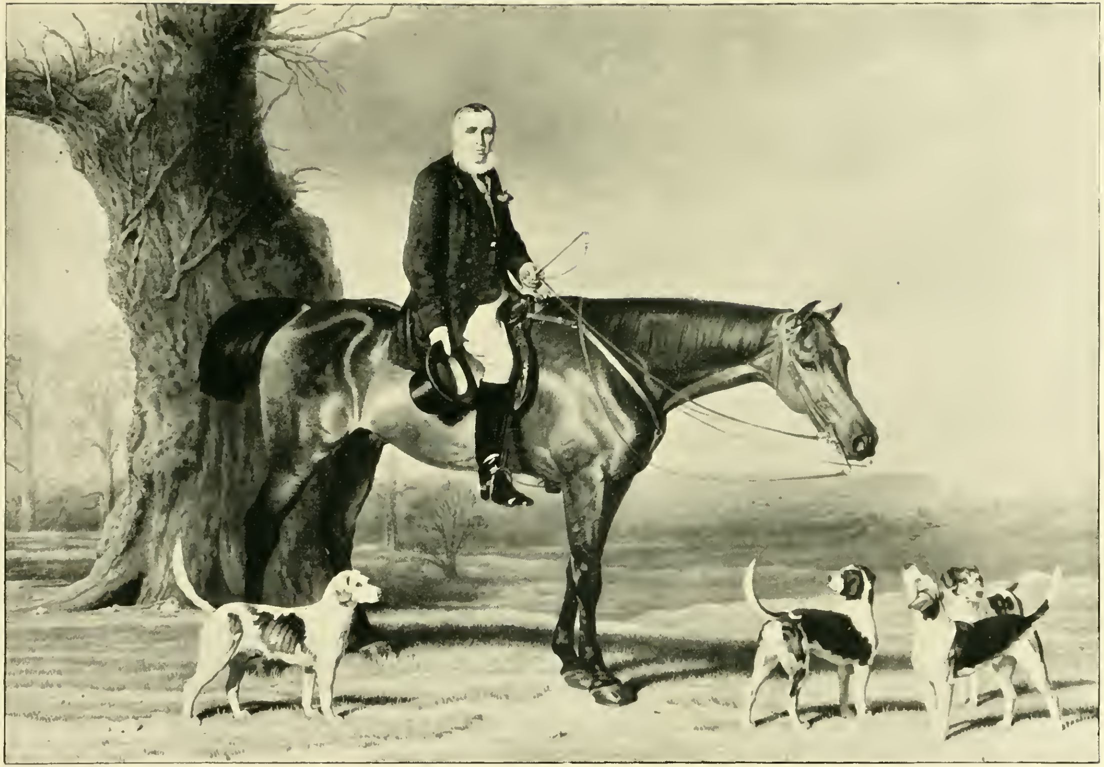
Wicksted, of Betley, one of the best-known sportsmen of that day. He kept his hounds at Betley, and, with the famous old Will Wells for his huntsman, showed capital sport for eleven years. Warburton has devoted the first of his hunting songs to the Woore country :—

"Now summer's dull season is over,
Once more we behold the glad pack,
And Wicksted appears at the cover
Once more on old Mercury's back.
And Wells in the saddle is seated,
Though with scarce a whole bone in his skin,
His cheer by the echo repeated,
'Loo in, little dearies ! Loo in !' "

"Mercury" figures also in a race at the Anson Hunt Meeting in 1825, as appears from the *Sporting Magazine* for that year. The serious history of the North Stafford Hunt begins with the Mastership of Mr. Wicksted in 1825.

The same magazine for 1829 has the following account of a great competition for superiority between the rival packs of Shropshire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire :—

"On Tuesday, April 7th, 1829, a very numerous field, consisting of upwards of six hundred of the principal performers of the neighbouring counties, attracted by honest rivalry and good fellowship, met at Shavington (Lord Kilmorey's) in consequence of a previous agreement entered into between Sir Harry Mainwaring, manager of the Cheshire, Mr. Lloyd, of Aston, manager of the Shropshire, and Mr. Wicksted, of the Staffordshire. Seven couples were selected from each pack in this trial of excellence. Found in Shavington Wood; off they went at an astonishingly terrible pace to Styche, then to Cloverly Gorse, where they came to a check; crossed New Street lane, leaving Ightfield to the left, and lost near Burlydam. This burst lasted about twenty-five minutes. Next proceeded to Combermere, found, and killed in cover, as was believed the same fox which had got away in the morning. A third was quickly viewed, which, after affording twenty minutes' delightful sport, was observed by Will Staples to be a bitch fox. The hounds were in consequence whipped off, and so ended the hunting of that day. 'Chanter,' the pride of Shropshire, was the first to give tongue, and with 'Orator' of the same pack, led the way for a considerable time, and these two were allowed to be the best hounds in the field, and of course proud Salopia claimed the superiority in the day's sport. Sir H. Mainwaring, who managed the united pack, added greatly to the pleasure by his gentlemanlike yet firm conduct throughout. Of Mr. Wicksted, it is sufficient to say that his hounds exhibited convincing proofs of the benefits resulting from a well-ordered system both in the kennel and in the field. Will Head, the huntsman of the Cheshire, after a sharp contest, succeeded in gaining the brush, for which honour he found



CHARLES WICKSTED, M.F.H.

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zealous opponents in Mr. Wells and Will Staples, whose quickness and judgment are above all praise. Mr. Mytton, Capt. Owen, of Woodhouse (on the 'Devil,' the property of Mr. M.), and Mr. Eyton, jun., Leeswood, kept in front throughout the day."

1829. *Sporting Magazine*, vol. 74, p. 56.

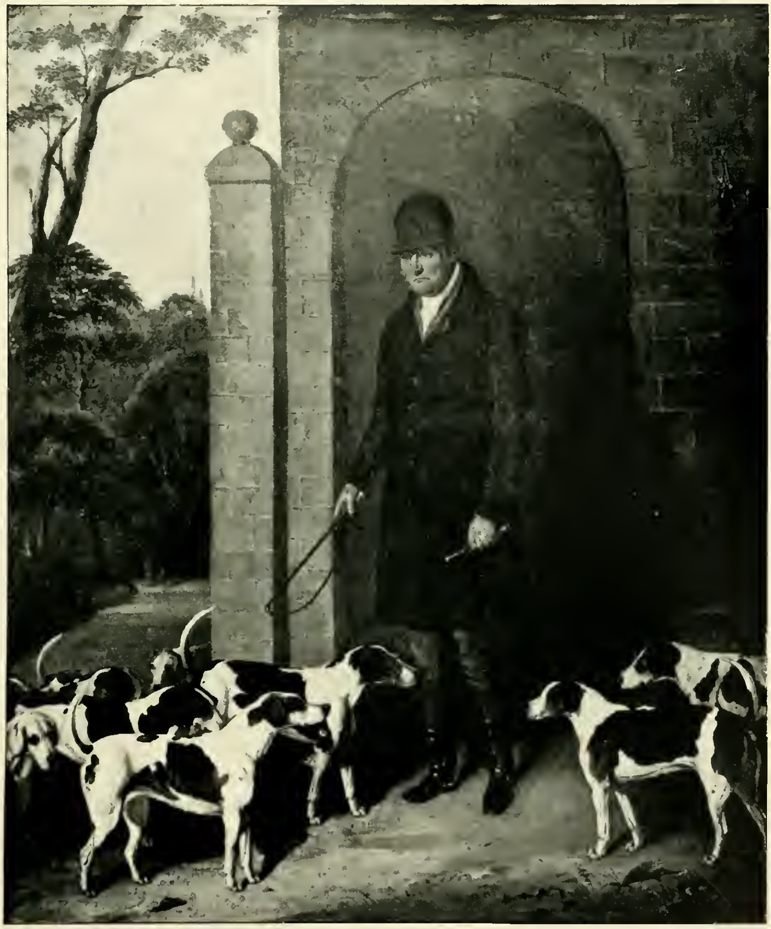
The *Sportsman's Cabinet* contains most appreciative notices of Mr. Wicksted's hounds. In the number for November, 1832, the writer mentions Mr. Wicksted's hounds along with Mr. Osbaldeston's, the Belvoir, Mr. Meynell's, the Cheshire, and others as being the "fleetest foxhounds" which had fallen under his notice. In the number for March, 1833, appears a long and most interesting account of a visit of the same correspondent to Betley in the January of the year. From what he says, it would appear that Mr. Wicksted's pack was of a very high quality, and ranked high among the packs of that date. He writes, "The dogs were about twenty-five inches in height, and remarkable for bone, strength, and beautiful symmetry, and that the bitches were nearly as tall, and that the whole pack exhibited a levelness which he had never seen excelled in any other pack." In numbers they were twenty-three and a half couples. After giving other details about the hounds, the writer goes on to say, "Mr. Wicksted goes out five days in a fortnight. His country (Staffordshire) appears to be of considerable extent, and although I am not altogether a stranger to it, I was not aware that it contained woodlands of one thousand and one thousand five hundred acres, and these woodlands, which ought to produce many cubs yearly, I was sorry to find seldom held a single litter." Fox-stealers abound in these parts, and Mr. Wicksted remarked that if snow should fall so as to enable the fox-stealers to trace, all the foxes in these (the remoter) parts of his country would be taken. After mentioning many other details about Betley and Mr. Wicksted's hunting establishment, the writer goes on to give an account of a meet at Wistaston on January 15, 1833. The sport on that day appears to have consisted of a fast twenty-three minutes from Wistaston to Crewe Park, ending with a kill. A second fox was found in a wood in Crewe Park, and took them by Betley to Heighley Castle, where he beat them. From the account, it appears that the woods now separate and known as Heighley Castle and the Gladdings were then all one wood and known by the former name. Even now, in their reduced and separate form, they constitute a harbour where it is almost impossible to kill a fox, so what must it not have been in those days? How many foxes have owed their lives to the sheltering fastnesses of the Gladdings? On the 18th Mr. Wicksted's hounds met at Adderley, and Buerton Gorse seems to have furnished a stout fox in the afternoon, which afforded a long run, of which, unfortunately, there are no details furnished.

Mr. Wicksted appears to have been a thorough sportsman, and to have been second to none at that time in all fox-hunting knowledge.

A word here about Wells will not be out of place. He had the reputation of being a very hard man to hounds, and in his time he broke his collar-bone seven times and fractured his ribs twice. He had been with the Bedfordshire hounds for thirty-six years before he went to Mr. Wicksted, during twenty-four of which he was huntsman. He remained with Mr. Wicksted during the eleven years he hunted the Woore country, and then went to Sir Thomas Boughey, and died in his service March 30, 1847.

Warburton says of him, "Wells was a huntsman of the old school, whose like is seldom seen in these degenerate days. He appears to have adopted the maxim of the old Cornish huntsman, 'Master finds horse, and I find neck.' He doated upon every hound in his pack with as much fondness as a father feels for his children."

Mr. Wicksted and his hounds deserve more than a passing word of notice. Although, unfortunately, his diaries appear to have been lost, and there is little record available of his doings in the way of sport, yet from what Warburton says of him in his songs and elsewhere, and from such records as are forthcoming, it is evident that he was not only a thorough sportsman and fine



WILLIAM WELLS.

rider to hounds, but that he was a man of culture and literary tastes, and of a sprightly wit. Mr. Egerton Warburton, in the notes to his hunting songs, *à propos* of the poem entitled "The Woore Country," says—

> "Charles Wicksted, the hero of this song, hunted the Woore country from the year 1825 to the year 1836. It was ever Mr. Wicksted's chief delight to know that his hounds had afforded a good day's sport to his friends, though no one enjoyed a run more keenly or described one with more enthusiasm than himself. 'The Woore Country' was written in the year 1830, in reply to the song called 'The Cheshire Hunt,' of which Mr. Wicksted was the author."

Mr. Wicksted's song, "The Cheshire Hunt," thus alluded to by Warburton, contained some spirited stanzas, but as it relates entirely to the Cheshire field and country, and not to North Staffordshire, it scarcely seems appropriate to quote it here *in extenso.* Moreover, it is printed in the notes to Warburton's songs, and is thus very well known. The opening verse is as follows :—

"Come, awake from your slumbers, jump out of your bed,
Drink your tea, mount your hack, and away to Well Head;
For who'd be behindhand or like to be late
When Sir Harry's fleet pack at the coverside wait?"

It is an additional point in favour of Mr. Wicksted's verses that they produced Warburton's well-known and spirited poem called "The Woore Country," of which we have already quoted the first verse referring to Mr. Wicksted and Wells.

In the same poem the Cheshire bard happily touches off the late Sir Thomas Boughey—

"There's Aqualate's Baronet, Boughey,
Whose eye still on Wicksted is cast.
Should the fox run till midnight, I know he
Will stick by his friend to the last."

The last verse of Warburton's poem describing the kill is worth quoting—

"More eager for blood at each stroke,
See Vengeance and Vulpecide rush.
Poor Reynard! he thinks it no joke
Hearing Joker so close at his brush.

When ended, half mad with the skurry,
Charlie flings on the saddle his rein,
First dances, then shouts, 'Worry! Worry!'
Then shouts and then dances again."

Allowing for some poetic license, it is easy to see that "Charlie" Wicksted was heart and soul a sportsman, and a sportsman of a genial and popular type, who was thoroughly appreciated by his friends and neighbours.

He appears to have been possessed of ample means, having inherited a considerable property from a great-uncle in his early days when an undergraduate at Christ Church, whereupon he took the name of Wicksted in lieu of the paternal name of Tollet. He was the only son of George Tollet, of Betley, who was not at any time a hunting man. Wells was first whip and kennel huntsman only for the most part, as Mr. Wicksted usually hunted his own hounds, and was most devoted to them. The present Mr. C. W. Wicksted (his son and successor to the Shakenhurst property) informs the present writer that after his first season his father killed a fox for every hound he had in kennel, and sometimes many more, but he was always a great advocate for keeping as few hounds as possible, and those the very best he could breed. Harlequin, 23 inches high, of whom we give a portrait, was one of his best. Mr. Wicksted sold some of his hounds to Mr. Foljambe, of Osberton, at seventy guineas a couple; the rest went to Sir Thomas Boughey, of Aqualate, who, after Mr. Wicksted's retirement, hunted a portion of the North Staffordshire country for a short time. The following playful duel in verse took place some time during Mr. Wicksted's Mastership between himself and Mr. Hodgson, the Master of the Holderness, and afterwards of the Quorn—the reference is to the foxhound show then held at Osberton, in Nottinghamshire, when the prizes consisted of a silver horn, a roll of red broadcloth, and a saddle. Mr. Hodgson opens fire with the following humorous lines:—

"Oh, Charlie, from Betley how dare you appear
With your Staffordshire turnspits in Nottinghamshire,
And 'fore the fine judgment of Lambton to bring
A son of your 'Joker,' some poor wretched thing,
Against 'Pipers' and 'Nestors' to bear off a prize?
Oh, Charlie, hold hard, lest a thought should arise
That hunting in coal-pits has blinded your eyes.
The praises of 'Joker' you've trumpeted forth
O'er London's gay city and far thro' the north,
Till you've cheated yourself into thinking, alas!
That a trumpet of silver you'd gain by your brass.
Or if broadcloth has tempted you hither to come,
How dismal the prospects next winter at home!
No saddle to shield you, nor cloth will you win,
And 'Joker' will prove a bad jest for your skin."

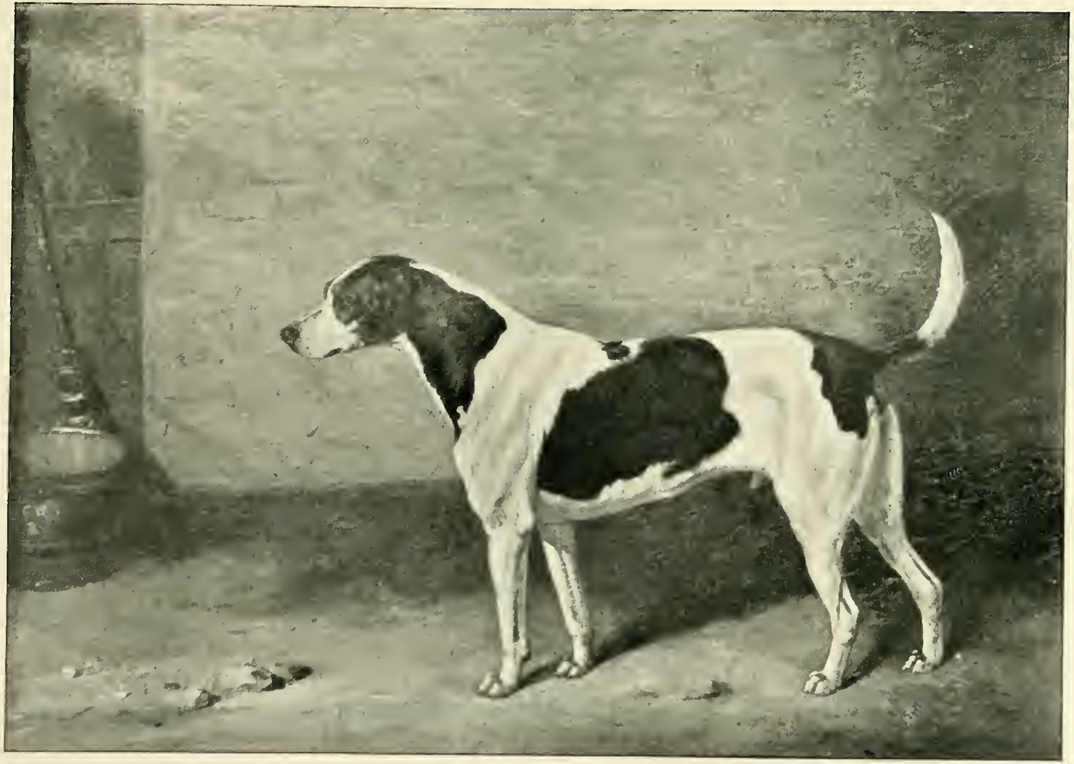
Mr. Wicksted rose to the occasion, and gave his opponent a Roland for his Oliver in the shape of the following lines:—

"Oh, Nestor, to joke thus how can you begin,
Forgetting the proverb, 'Let those laugh who win'?
Your trencher-fed puppies won't win you one prize,
Saddle, broadcloth, or trumpet, to gladden your eyes.
Ere old Wells's coat shall be shorn of its skirts,
Both you and Will Danby shall work in your shirts;
For no Holderness tailor shall measure a stitch
Of broadcloth that's won by a Holderness bitch.
You must use your old saddles, and break your old reins
With pulling old screws through the Holderness drains.
Of the silver-toned trumpet, depend on't, no hound
On the far side of Humber shall e'er hear the sound.
So from joking forbear; it will prove a wrong cast,
For you're sure to be beat by a 'Joker' at last."

There is a tradition that Mrs. Hodgson was really the author of the first poem, but it was sent as from her husband, and was so responded to, as we see. It is evident that Mr. Wicksted was a good judge of hounds, and that he spared no expense or trouble in improving the quality of his pack, and getting hold of all the best available blood. The present writer has been informed on the best authority that just before Lord Henry Bentinck died he showed Mr. Lane Fox twenty-five couple of hounds descended from Crazy by Mr. Wicksted's Harlequin above mentioned, and through her the Blankney Comus and Contest, and a number of other well-known hounds, have become famous in work right up to the present day. We are told that Mr. Wicksted used to see a good deal of Mr. Eld, of Seighford, in the twenties and thirties, and no doubt he hunted the Seighford district. He often used to take his hounds to Shugborough, on the invitation of the then Earl of Lichfield, for a few days' hunting at the end of the season. There is still a tradition in the Wicksted family that old Wells used to look upon these pilgrimages to Shugborough, and hunting in a strange country, as a very serious undertaking, and his uproarious delight is still spoken of when their day's sport was crowned with success. Mr. Wicksted gave up the hounds (which he had kept entirely at his own expense) when he married, and went to live at Shakenhurst, in Shropshire, having acquired the Shakenhurst property through his marriage. It is a source of great regret that the diaries both of Mr. Wicksted and of Wells should have disappeared. It was well known that both kept hunting diaries, and at this distance of time it is quite impossible to remedy their loss. The following account of the celebrated sire "Harlequin" appears in the *Sporting Magazine* of November, 1839 :—

> "Harlequin, a celebrated foxhound now in the kennel of Sir Thomas Boughey, and who won a prize at the Hound Show at Osberton, was bred by Mr. Wicksted, by Lord Tavistock's Adrian out of Mr. Wicksted's Elegant. Adrian by Lord Tavistock's Hercules, and Elegant by the Duke of Beaufort's Edgar."

We have already mentioned the periodical visits of Mr. Wicksted with his hounds and his huntsman, Wells, to Shugborough in the time of the first Lord Lichfield; but it seems to be scarcely known, or remembered, in the county, that the first Earl of Lichfield, when Viscount Anson, for a number of years (from about 1819 to 1830), used to bring his hounds every year from Atherstone to Shugborough for a few days' hunting in Staffordshire, often in the cub-hunting time, and again in the spring



"HARLEQUIN," FAVOURITE HOUND OF MR. WICKSTED.

to finish the season. Lord Anson was well known to fame as a master of foxhounds in the Atherstone country, and is mentioned with distinction by "Nimrod" in his "hunting tours." The present Lord Lichfield has kindly furnished the writer with extracts from his ancestor's diary, and other documentary evidence, which prove beyond all doubt that in those early years of the nineteenth century Lord Anson (he was created Earl of Lichfield in 1831) not only frequently drew Orange Hayes and the Sandon and Seighford coverts, all of which now belong to the North Staffordshire Hunt, but also Ranton Abbey, Shugborough, Orgreave, and Teddesley, now belonging to the South Staffordshire and Albrighton Hunts, and occasionally, during the same period, Lord Anson's hounds used to meet at Ingestre. Lord Anson gave up keeping foxhounds in 1830, on being appointed Master of the King's Buckhounds, and we gather that most of the visits of Mr. Wicksted to Shugborough with his own hounds must have taken place between 1830 and 1836. Of Lord Anson "Nimrod" says that he "was fond of hounds; his fondness for hounds has, much to his credit, made him a sportsman—his fondness for hounds has made him one of the best and hardest riders of the present day."

It was in Mr. Wicksted's time that the Woore country acquired the hunting reputation that has lasted in full vigour to the present day, and it must have been a source of great regret when he retired, in 1836.

During these years the only records of hunting on the Stone side of the North Staffordshire country are accounts of a pack of staghounds kept by Sir Clifford Constable. On October 8th, 1827, they had a great run of two hours and forty minutes after a stag named "Nimrod," which had been turned out at Walton Heath, near Stone.

Sir Clifford Constable seems to have done the thing in capital style, and the "turn-out" was Lincoln green.

An entry in a diary of Thomas Fitzherbert, then owner of Swynnerton, shows that these staghounds were hunting in 1825, when they met at Tittensor on January

4th of that year. There are also several entries in these diaries mentioning Wicksted's hounds as having met at Swynnerton or its neighbourhood, which shows that his hunting country extended over a great part of North Staffordshire. In the year Mr. Wicksted retired Mr. Walter Giffard also gave up the Albrighton; and Sir Thomas Boughey, who succeeded the latter and had his kennels at Aqualate, undertook to hunt the following portions of Mr. Wicksted's late country: Aqualate and Ranton, now in the Albrighton country, and Seighford, Swynnerton, Maer, the Bishop's Woods, Betley, and Audley. When Sir Thomas Boughey gave up, in 1840, Mr. William Davenport, who had already kept a pack of harriers, began to hunt part of the vacated country, and we find, from documentary evidence in our possession, that in 1842 Mr. Davenport had acquired a considerable portion of the North Staffordshire country, and had begun regularly to hunt foxes; but it was not till 1845 that he regularly hunted the whole of what is now known as the North Staffordshire Hunt. Mr. Davenport began by advertising two days a week, which after two or three seasons he increased to five days a fortnight. In 1846 he engaged the well-known Joe Maiden as huntsman, who remained with him in that capacity for seventeen years, till he retired after the season 1862–63.

According to "Cecil," in an article in the *Field*, January, 1868, Joe Maiden had already had a wide experience of hunting and of hounds. When a boy, he commenced as whipper-in to a pack of harriers kept by Mr. Whitmore at Apley, near Bridgnorth. He then lived with Mr. Garforth, but was soon engaged as second whip to Lord Middleton, in Warwickshire. From there he went to whip-in to Mr. Hornyold, in Worcestershire; and when these hounds were given up he was engaged for the season 1823–24 by Sir Bellingham Graham, who was then hunting the Albrighton. Subsequently we find him acting as huntsman to Sir Clifford Constable's staghounds at Tixall, Staffordshire; but that not suiting his taste, he engaged himself to Mr. Shaw, of Cliffe House, near Tamworth, who was hunting the Atherstone country.

While he was with Mr. Shaw he met with the terrible accident that caused him so much suffering in after-life. He slipped with one leg into a boiling copper, and the effects of the fearful scalding increasing as he advanced in age, it was at last deemed advisable that his leg should be amputated below the knee, which was done on November 18th, 1855. Even this, however, did not stop his hunting, and he managed to ride and fulfil the duties of huntsman for seven more seasons by means of a cleverly contrived cork leg, and an arrangement whereby it was held to the saddle and yet would become free in case of an accident. In 1832 Joe Maiden had transferred his services from Mr. Shaw to Sir Harry Mainwaring, then the master of the Cheshire.

After Sir Harry's retirement, in 1837, Maiden continued as huntsman with the Cheshire till 1844, when he took the Blue Cap Inn at Sandiway Head. After two years the old hunting instincts proved too strong, and he returned to harness as huntsman to Mr. Davenport in 1846. He did not long survive his final retirement, in 1863, but died October 20th, 1864. Warburton, speaking of Maiden's tenure of office with the Cheshire Hounds, says that as a huntsman he had never seen his equal, and that he was, moreover, as pleasant a companion to ride home with after a run as any gentleman could desire. On Maiden's retirement, Mr. Davenport passed on the horn to Tom Atkinson, who had been first whip for about fifteen years. He was a first-rate rider, and very bad to beat across country. As a whip he was excellent, but was not so successful as a huntsman. Mr. Davenport often took the horn himself, both in Maiden's and Atkinson's time; in fact, for some years when the former was huntsman he regularly hunted one pack himself. We must, however, now hark back to the period when Mr. William Davenport commenced his hunting career. As far back as the time that Mr. Wicksted was hunting the

Woore country, Mr. Henry Davenport, elder brother of Mr. William Davenport, kept a pack of harriers at Milton, near Burslem. In 1835, he was unfortunately killed by his horse falling in jumping a stone wall. This pack was sold and taken by canal-boat to Liverpool, where several hounds escaped and found their way back to Milton. Very shortly after this Mr. William Davenport followed his brother's example, and we find him established with a pack of harriers, and ready, in 1840, to begin to take up some of the country then being vacated by Sir Thomas Boughey; and in 1845 he commenced in real earnest to improve and strengthen his pack of foxhounds, and was a large buyer at Mr. Foljambe's sale in that year.

Mr. Davenport, who was a thorough judge of hounds, as well as an excellent sportsman, went in for the best of blood from the outset, and besides the Foljambe purchase, and two drafts from Assheton Smith, he bought a Worcestershire pack that had been carefully bred by Captain Candler mostly from Fitzhardinge-bred sires, and a little later on Sir Massey Stanley's Cheshire pack of twenty-five couples was bought. There were also drafts from the Badsworth and the Belvoir, and after ten years' breeding from such stock, Mr. Davenport's pack stood second to very few in the country.

Rather a big hound was popular in those days, Joe Maiden being partial to size, or rather bone, and his dog-hounds were pretty nearly twenty-four inches high, the bitches being smaller, and in Maiden's time and afterwards the lady pack enjoyed a very high reputation indeed. Joe Maiden had a great fancy for the old Cheshire blood, and he got it to his satisfaction in the purchase from Sir Massey Stanley. "Bedford" and "Pleader" were two noted sires of the Cheshire blood which had much to do with the building up of the pack in Mr. Davenport's time, with Maiden's advice and assistance. At the commencement of Mr. Davenport's mastership, the kennels were at the Pottery Racecourse, afterwards they were at Wolstanton for many years, and in 1863 the hounds were moved into the new kennels at Trentham. These had been built by the second Duke of Sutherland for his son's sporting dogs, and with some alterations and additions suggested by Mr. Davenport, and carried out by the third Duke, they made excellent foxhound kennels, and were lent by him to Mr. Davenport, and afterwards to the hunt, and there the hounds remain to the present day. The hunting fraternity in North Staffordshire can never forget that they are under a great obligation to Mr. Davenport for the care and judgment and liberality with which he built up a splendid pack of hounds, and for the handsome and liberal manner in which he hunted the country for fully twenty-seven years, the greater part of this time entirely at his own expense. It is not too much to say that in the first few years of his mastership he had got together a pack that would have done credit to any hunt, and was in a position to breed his own hounds, and became independent of having to make up with large drafts from other packs. He seems to have been anxious to retain the Fitzhardinge and Belvoir, as well as the Cheshire, strains in his kennel, and not a year passed without his making use of sires in one or more of those well-known kennels, besides occasionally employing sires of Lord Yarborough's, the Fitzwilliam, the Badminton, Mr. Meynell's and other old-established packs. In 1862 a large and important addition was made by the incorporation of several couples from the Meynell pack, and this was the last addition of much note under Mr. Davenport's mastership, though he continued to the end to keep his pack up to the pitch of excellence at which it had arrived by careful breeding and judicious crossing with the best blood in England.

Mr. Davenport was most popular amongst all classes, genial in his manner, exceedingly hospitable, a keen sportsman of the good old-fashioned sort, and, till handicapped by increasing infirmities, a good man to hounds. There was a good show of sport, and many excellent runs, during Mr. Davenport's mastership, but the detailed accounts of remarkable runs will come in more appropriately later on. We find from Joe Maiden's diaries that the average yearly kill of foxes during Maiden's tenure of office was about 35, the highest 46, and lowest 23. The writer remembers him well as a bluff, zealous old huntsman, with cheery voice and manner, and a determination to show sport and to be with his hounds which was surprising, considering his age and his infirmity already referred to. He must have been a first-rate performer in his best days, and no doubt his hound knowledge and his management in the kennel had much to do with the signal success of the pack in the days of Mr. Davenport. Old Maiden had a brusque way with him, and would stand no nonsense from subordinates. It is recorded of him that a nervous second whip came to him one day in the hunting-field and said, "This 'ere 'orse will break my neck." "Who ever heard of a second whip having a neck? You go and turn them hounds," was the only reply Maiden vouchsafed. Not long before his death, old Maiden asked Mr. Davenport that he might be buried in Maer Churchyard, so that foxes might sometimes come and sport over his grave, as he said. The request was granted, and, strange to say, within a year of his death the hounds actually killed a fox literally on his grave, which was taken from them by Mr. Henry Davenport to be broken up on the Maer terraces adjoining the churchyard. Some curious incidents appear in Maiden's diaries; for instance, he notes that on one occasion, November 15th, 1853, when the hounds met at Swynnerton Hall, and found at the Pilstones covert, the fox, in the course of the run, climbed to the top of the steward's house at Trentham, but was dislodged and killed at Hanchurch, after a good run of an hour and a half. Again on November 5th, 1852, the meet being at Adderley, he records as a singular occurrence hunting was stopped in the afternoon by rain, thunder, and lightning. On November 29th, 1847, the hounds met at Siddington Tollbar; they ran a fox to ground at Alderley, where eight traps were found set round the earth. The fox escaped getting into any of them, but the hounds got into every one, and the scene may well be imagined, the wrath of the Master and the field, and the yelping of the unfortunate hounds.

It is pleasant to record that, after ten years of faithful service, Maiden was presented, in December, 1856, with a testimonial in the shape of a handsome sum of money from the members of the Hunt, handed over to him in a silver cup, the gift of Mr. Davenport.

For the season of 1858–59, we find it recorded in Maiden's diary that the hounds were only stopped one day by frost during the whole season. "O si sic omnes!" the sportsman with a good stud of horses would say. When the pack became a subscription pack, Colonel Coote Buller became hon. secretary, and performed the duties very efficiently until his death, which happened shortly before Mr. Davenport gave up the hounds. Just before his retirement, Mr. Davenport was presented with a testimonial by the members of the Hunt, which is thus recorded in the *Field*:

> "We understand that a magnificent testimonial has been presented to Mr. Davenport, the Master of the North Staffordshire Hounds, by his friends and neighbours and members of the Hunt, as a mark of the high esteem and regard in which he is held by them. Mr. Davenport has hunted the country, we believe, for nearly a quarter of a century, and almost entirely at his own expense. Commencing with what might be called a scratch pack, by his own great judgment and experience, and totally regardless of expense, and assisted perhaps a little by his old servant Joe Maiden, he has got together, and has had for some seasons back, a pack of foxhounds that will bear comparison with any pack in the kingdom. Mr. Davenport is, perhaps, one of the best judges of a hound extant. It was the wish of the subscribers to have invited the worthy Master to a public dinner, at which the Duke of Sutherland would have been requested to preside, had the state of Mr. Davenport's health permitted of it. The testimonial is a beautiful vase, surmounted by a model of an old favourite hunter, portrayed to the life, at the base, models of one or two favourite hounds. The whole reflects the greatest credit on Messrs. Garrard."

During the greater part of his mastership Mr. Davenport had resided at Maer Hall, near Whitmore, a property of considerable extent and beauty, which he had acquired by purchase from the Wedgwood family in the year 1847. The residence was admirably placed for the Master's headquarters, being not far from the kennels, and well in the centre of the hunt, and the extensive coverts called Maer Hills (on the estate) came in well for cub-hunting in the autumn. Mr. Davenport here delighted to entertain his friends, especially those who were keen after the good old sport, and a more hospitable house than Maer Hall was never known, as some of the sportsmen of that day are still here to testify. Amongst others we may mention the late Duke of Rutland, the late Lord Talbot (afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury), Lord Combermere, Lord Henry Thynne, Sir Harry Mainwaring, Captain White, M.F.H., Sir Watkin W. Wynn, the late Earl of Lichfield, Lord Wrottesley, Mr. Henry Clive of Styche, Mr. Thornhill, Mr. Nesfield, Lords Henry, Alexander, and Berkeley Paget, the Bullers, the Fitzherberts (of Swynnerton), Jack Mytton, the Coyneys (father and son), the Philipses (Heybridge and Heath House), besides many others, as frequent guests at the hall in the fifties and the early sixties.

Mr. Davenport had only one son, Mr. Henry Davenport, who often officiated as field master in his father's later years; he was an accomplished horseman, and a "past master" in all that appertained to fox-hunting. There were eight daughters. Miss Davenport, the eldest daughter, married the present baronet, Sir Morton E. M. Buller, of Dilhorn Hall; another daughter married Colonel Rivers Bulkeley, who some twenty years ago had the honour of successfully piloting the Empress of Austria with the Cheshire and North Staffordshire packs; another daughter married Reginald N. Wood, for years, and still, one of the straightest and best men with the North Stafford; another married the late Colonel Reginald Buller of the Grenadier Guards, a leading and staunch supporter of the Hunt; another married the late Colonel Frederick Buller of the Coldstreams, a right good man across country; whilst another married Mr. Hugh Ker Colville, of Bellaport, also well known as a good supporter of the Hunt. We may be pardoned for quoting here a cheery account of the North Staffordshire Hunt in Mr. Davenport's time, given by

"Bob" Worrall, formerly second whipper-in to the North Staffordshire hounds in Joe Maiden's time, and afterwards well known to fame as huntsman of the Warwickshire. Bob Worrall (speaking to one of the authors of the "History of the Warwickshire Hunt," published in 1896) says—

> "In 1856 I went to the North Staffordshire under Joe Maiden. The hounds were then at Wolstanton, near Burslem. Mr. Davenport did the thing well. There were often five Miss Davenports out on horses worth 150 or 200 guineas apiece. Mr. Jack Mytton, junior, was often visiting there. I remember young Mr. Davenport well as a boy. I was second whip there for one season. Tom Atkinson was first, one of the best whippers-in I have ever seen; he was huntsman afterwards. I had some nice horses there. I remember a brown mare that Mr. Henry Davenport took to college with him, a 'clinker.'" (See "The Annals of the Warwickshire Hunt," vol. i. p. 288.)

In the "Life and Letters of Charles Darwin" (vol. i. pp. 43, 44) will be found an interesting account of Maer in the days when Mr. Josiah Wedgwood (son of the distinguished founder of the Etruria works) lived there and owned the property. Charles Darwin says—

> "One of my autumnal visits to Maer in 1827 was memorable from meeting there Sir J. Mackintosh, who was the best converser I ever listened to. I heard afterwards, with a glow of pride, that he had said, 'There is something in that young man that interests me.' This must have been chiefly due to his perceiving that I listened with much interest to everything which he said, for I was as ignorant as a pig about his subjects of history, politics, and moral philosophy. To hear of praise from an eminent person, though no doubt apt or certain to excite vanity, is, I think, good for a young man, as it helps to keep him in the right course. My visits to Maer during these two or three succeeding years were quite delightful, independently of the autumnal shooting. Life there was perfectly free, the country was very pleasant for walking or riding, and in the evening there was much very agreeable conversation, not so personal as it generally is in large family parties, together with music. In the summer the whole family used often to sit on the steps of the old portico, with the flower garden in front, and with the steep wooded bank opposite the house reflected in the lake, with here and there a fish rising or a water-bird paddling about. Nothing has left a more vivid picture on my mind than those evenings at Maer."

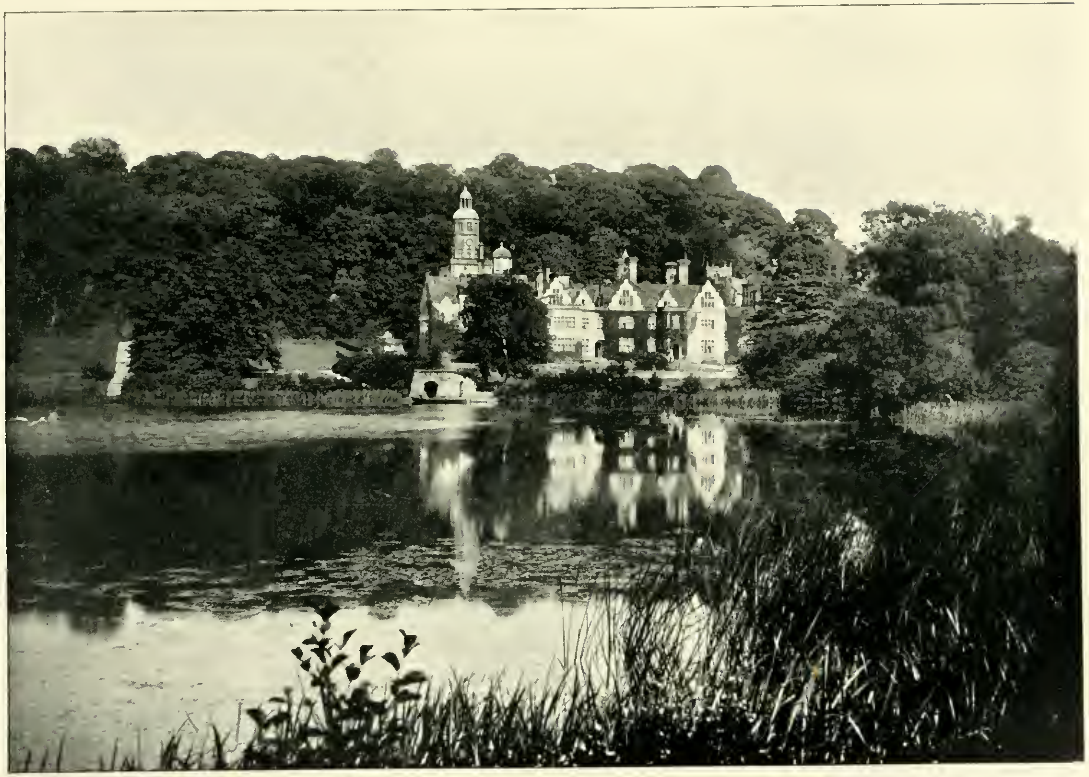
Miss Meteyard, too, in her pleasant book "A Group of Englishmen," tells us how Sir James Mackintosh, on his return from India in 1812, paid a visit to the Wedgwoods at Maer, where he speaks of having "five delightful days." In the same volume (p. 387) we read that Sydney Smith was amongst the many friends and visitors entertained by Mr. Josiah Wedgwood at Maer. Mrs. Marsh Caldwell (quoted by Miss Meteyard) gives us a graphic picture of the witty Canon of St. Paul's—

> "If I recollect right," she says, "it was about the year 1812 that I first had the gratification to meet Mr. Sydney Smith. It was at the house of Mr. Josiah Wedgwood. He arrived about the middle of the day, with his wife and children. He entered, and in an instant made everybody feel at their ease and infused a portion of his animation into all around him. The next day he took a long walk over the hills with us, and most agreeable he was, giving out his mind with a variety and abundance of ideas which delighted us, and showed how little need he had of external excitement to call forth his powers of wit and wisdom.
>
> "It was his custom to stroll about the room in which we were sitting, and which was lined with books, taking down one book after another, sometimes reading or quoting aloud, sometimes discussing any subject that arose. . . . 'You must preach, Mr. Smith,' said Mrs. Wedgwood (it was Saturday). 'We must go and try the pulpit, then,' said he, 'to see if it suits me.' So to the church we walked, and how he amused us by his droll way of trying the pulpit, as he called it! In 1816 I had again the happiness to pass a few days with Mr. Smith in the same family, and we found him, if possible, still more delightful than before. He would sit for hours with us by the fire, discoursing and making us all wiser and better, and of course most proud and happy by his notice."
>
> "We may be certain, did similar evidence exist," says Miss Meteyard, "that the visits of Archdeacon Wrangham, Basil Montagu, Dr. Darwin of Shrewsbury, Poole, and others as well known, were as full of pleasantness as these recorded. Josiah Wedgwood died at Maer Hall, July 13th, 1843, aged 73 years."

It was a few years after his death that Mr. Davenport purchased the Maer estate from the Wedgwood family, as already stated, and, as we have seen, he kept up to the full the hospitable and pleasant traditions of Maer Hall. He made very large additions and alterations, almost rebuilding the house, and adding extensive stabling, and it was not until 1851 or 1852 that everything was ready for his occupation, and he went into residence there with his family.

It is worth while, perhaps, to relate that it was mainly owing to the influence and kindly intervention of Mr. Wedgwood, of Maer, that Darwin was allowed to go round the world in the *Beagle*, thus laying the foundation of his pre-eminently distinguished career as a naturalist. This is how Darwin himself tells the story :—

> "I was eager to accept the offer (of the post of naturalist on board the *Beagle*), but my father strongly objected, adding the words, fortunate for me, 'If you can find any man of common sense who advises you to go, I will give my consent.'



MAER HALL.

So I wrote that evening and refused the offer. On the next morning I went to Maer to be ready for September 1st. Whilst out shooting, my uncle (Josiah Wedgwood) sent for me, offering to drive me over to Shrewsbury and talk with my father, as my uncle thought it would be wise in me to accept the offer. My father always maintained that he (my uncle) was one of the most sensible men in the world, and he at once consented in the kindest manner. I had been rather extravagant at Cambridge, and, to console my father, said 'that I should be deuced clever to spend more than my allowance whilst on board the *Beagle;*' but he answered with a smile, 'But they tell me you *are* very clever.'" *

It would have been nothing short of a calamity if Darwin had been prevented from going on this memorable voyage of scientific discovery, and, even in a fox-hunting book, one may be pardoned for recording with some degree of satisfaction that the influence of Maer Hall, and the intervention of a North Staffordshire worthy, helped to bring about such valuable results in the world of science and natural history.

It is only right to mention that Mr. F. J. Harrison, the present owner of Maer, is not only a good preserver of foxes and a liberal supporter of the Hunt, but a keen follower of the sport, so that Maer is still, as heretofore, one of the strongholds of the Hunt, and never fails to provide the right animal when hounds meet there.

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* See "Life and Letters of Charles Darwin," vol. i. p. 59.

## CHAPTER II.

### ROYAL VISIT TO TRENTHAM—DEATH OF MR. DAVENPORT—MR. DAVENPORT'S MASTERSHIP—STAFFORDSHIRE SPORTSMEN IN HIS TIME.

ONE of the notable incidents during Mr. Davenport's mastership was the presence of Royalty in the hunting-field in the persons of our present gracious King and Queen, then their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, during a visit to Trentham in January, 1866. The event is thus rather gushingly recorded in one of the local papers of February in that year :

"The first fact in the order of time which we have to mention in connection with the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales to Trentham, is that on Friday evening the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland gave a dinner-party, at which the following guests were present: The Prince and Princess of Wales, the Earl of Shrewsbury and Talbot and the Ladies Gertrude and Adelaide Talbot, the Earl of Lichfield, the Countess Grosvenor, the Countess of Morton (lady-in-waiting), the Earl and Countess Vane, the Earl and Countess of Sefton and the Lady Cecilia Molyneux, Lord and Lady Bagot, Lord Hill, Lord Ronald Gower, Lord Hay Campbell, the Hon. Mr. and Mrs. Coke, the Hon. H. L. Bourke, Major G. H. Grey (gentlemen-in-waiting), Mr. Sneyd, Dr. Quin, and Mr. Ramsbottom. On the same evening there was a dance in the drawing-room, for which purpose Coote and Tinney's band had been engaged. The company included, in addition to the distinguished party named above, a number of the local gentry. Dancing was commenced by a quadrille, which was opened by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Sutherland, the Duke of Sutherland and the Princess of Wales, the Earl of Sefton and the Countess Vane, and the Hon. H. L. Bourke and Lady Constance Grosvenor. Supper was served at twelve o'clock, and dancing was kept up until nearly three.

"Amongst the incidents of the Friday evening's entertainment was the performance of the All England Prize Bell Ringers of Uttoxeter, who were sent for by the Duchess on that day, and performed a selection of pieces in an apartment adjoining the ballroom.

"On Saturday Trentham presented the gayest scene ever witnessed in the memory of man. The hounds met in front of the hall at twelve o'clock, and were soon joined by their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, with a large number of nobility of both sexes, visitors to his grace. The meet was kept quiet, still a large concourse of people, horse and foot, assembled (carriages not being admitted), all anxious to get a look at their future sovereign. They first drew the Big Wood, entering it by the Green Drive, across which were placed two flights of hurdles, some two hundred yards apart, bound with gorse to a height of about six feet, which certainly for a start had rather a formidable appearance, serving to make the field more select. The Prince and Princess flew both in such gallant style that convinced every one accustomed to hunting that they were no amateurs, and, if a run, that they would take the lead.

"Reynard broke covert on the west side of the wood, running through Beech Cliff to Harley Thorn; then doubled back over the Toft Farm, trying his way back for Trentham. But the hounds were too close to be agreeable in the open, so he again tried for safety in Swynnerton Park, but they never left him or gave him a moment's respite. He again left that covert and ran nearly the same ring as before, returning to the same covert, where they pulled him down. They then trotted off to Tittensor Common, where the distinguished visitors paid Mr. Loch the compliment of a visit, taking refreshments, but lost no time in again joining the Hunt. The Common, Darlaston Wood, and Pilstones were drawn blank, still there seemed a smile on every face. Each had come for the honour and gratification of a day with the Prince and Princess, and was amply repaid. Throughout the day the style in which the Princess took her leaps was the admiration of every one.

"On Monday they met at Barlaston Hall. After drawing several coverts without success, they found at Moddershall Oaks, and had a run of twenty minutes over a very rough and hilly country, often with the fox in view, which in one instance took refuge in a cart-shed, where as the hounds entered every one expected Reynard was 'done;' but, jumping on a field roller, from thence through a hole in the roof, he made his escape, but was too much beat to last long, and in a few minutes they ran into him. The Prince and Princess both being up at the death, the Duke of Sutherland took the brush and placed it in the bridle of the Princess's horse.

"They next drew the Fulford coverts blank; then returned to Moddershall Oaks, where no sooner were the hounds put in than they found, but got so close to the fox that after five or ten minutes they killed him in covert, which was a disappointment to all, who, knowing this was the last day they were to be honoured with royalty, wished to wind up with a good run.

"They afterwards found a third fox in the same covert, but after some ten or fifteen minutes in the open lost him. Still they persevered as long as daylight lasted, and went to that capital covert Kendrick's Gorse, which used always to hold a fox, but for some cause this season has always been blank. From thence they returned to Trentham by way of Barlaston Hall, where the Royal party called and partook of the Squire's well-known hospitality. There the Hunt dispersed, each with an impression that he had partaken of a pleasure that would never be effaced from his memory."

Lord Ronald Gower, in his "Reminiscences," published in 1883, gives us the following graphic account of this Royal visit to Trentham, and of the grace and courage of the Princess of Wales :—

> "There was a park meet," says Lord Ronald, "on January 27th. The Princess looked very lovely on her horse King Arthur, and rode like a bird. Except hurdles, however, which had been put up in the Green Drive, there was little jumping. But the Princess took the hurdles beautifully; she has simply no sense of nervousness. Returning from the hunting after dark, riding through the woods where these hurdles were, she leapt them again, although both the Prince and Stafford had avoided them. In the next term at Cambridge, I found my old friend Professor Sedgwick delighted to hear of the Princess being such a plucky horsewoman, saying that her courage and nerve came from the grand old Norse breed—that blood that made such grand pirates. It would be difficult to say what a charm the Princess has both in looks and manner. She is so entirely free from affectation, and so easy to get on with."

For some time before his death Mr. Davenport, owing to failing health and increasing infirmities, had decided to resign the arduous duties of a Master of Foxhounds, and determined to retire after the end of the season of 1868–69, and with this view had made arrangements for his pack of hounds to be sold in the course of the summer of 1869. However, some weeks before the day fixed for the sale arrived, Mr. Davenport succumbed to his ailments and died on June 6th of that year, to the great regret of his many friends in North Staffordshire and elsewhere. He had not only hunted the country for twenty-seven seasons (during the first twenty-three years entirely at his own expense), but he had succeeded in establishing the hunt on a thoroughly sound and firm basis.

Mr. Davenport was by no means a mere sportsman, with no tastes and pursuits outside the hunting-field. On the contrary, he was a singularly able and successful man of business, and from his earliest days had devoted his keen faculties and his shrewd business talents to the development and increase of a large china and glass manufactory at Longport, originally established by his father, Mr. John Davenport. This important business was largely extended in the time of Mr. William Davenport, and under his management became a leading establishment in the district, with a great reputation for the excellence of its productions, and employing a large number of hands. Mr. Davenport's friends used sometimes to wonder how he could find sufficient time to devote to two objects so

WILLIAM DAVENPORT, M.F.H.

*Photo by Russell, London.*

absorbing as the business and the hounds, but "where there's a will there's a way," and the result showed pretty conclusively that neither the business nor the Hunt suffered from any lack of attention or care on the part of the Master.

The *Staffordshire Advertiser* of June 12th, 1869, contained the following appreciative notice of the late Master:—

"Our obituary of to-day contains a notice of the death of Mr. W. Davenport, of Maer Hall, the proprietor of the well-known and extensive china and glass manufacturing establishments at Longport. Mr. Davenport's health has been for several years declining, and for a few months past he was confined to his residence. The melancholy event occurred on Sunday, and on the following day Longport presented a truly mournful appearance, there being scarcely a house where the blinds were not drawn. Nor is it to be wondered at. Mr. Davenport was a kind and generous employer, and, in times of sickness especially, was ever found ready and willing to help his workpeople; and in this case the adage was exemplified, 'A good master makes a good servant.' Many have been retained in his service to a good old age; and, indeed, few firms can boast of having the number of old hands, some of whom have held their situations during their whole lives. From declining health, Mr. Davenport has not been able of late to hold much intercourse with his workpeople, but this has not lessened their long-continued esteem for him, and they all sincerely mourn the loss of an indulgent master and kind friend. Mr. Davenport's connection with the Longport works dates as far back as 1822. In 1833 he became a partner with his father and brother. The father was one of the first representatives of the Borough of Stoke-on-Trent, an honour which the recently deceased gentleman has on more than one occasion declined to seek, though earnestly urged to offer himself. In 1848 Mr. Davenport became sole proprietor of the several works at Longport, in addition to the establishments in London and Liverpool. He was a Magistrate of the County and a Deputy-Lieutenant, and in 1859 he filled the office of High Sheriff. Mr. Davenport was also a member of the Goldsmiths' Company in London. Although naturally of retiring habits, the deceased gentleman occasionally took part in public matters. He was one of the original promoters of the Staffordshire Potteries Waterworks Company, and for some years its chairman. He cut the first sod of this important undertaking, and one of the engines now at work at Wall Grange is styled 'The Davenport.' In 1854 he laid the foundation stone of the noble Town Hall at Burslem, and at the opening promised an organ—a promise which he afterwards munificently carried out. Mr. Davenport was a great lover of hunting. For more than twenty-five years he was Master of the North Staffordshire Hounds, and hunted the country at his own expense.* In 1847 Mr. Davenport purchased the Maer Hall estate from the Wedgwood family, and has since added largely to it. Mr. Davenport leaves a wife, one son, and eight daughters, the eldest of whom is married to M. E. M. Buller, Esq. The interests of the numerous workpeople have been consulted, with the same consideration that has been shown heretofore, in the arrangements consequent on the death of their employer. In order that they should not suffer by a general cessation of employment, the manager received instructions to keep the establishments open as usual, except on the day of the funeral."

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* For the last four seasons there was a subscription.

Mr. Davenport was well known in the hunting world as a fine judge of hounds. He knew how to breed them for the well-wooded country he had to hunt, and knew that they required stamina and tongue, with plenty of bone, and good legs and feet, to hunt a fox to death. His old huntsman, Joe Maiden, knew as much as his master, if not more, on all these points, for he had had many years' experience with the Cheshire as huntsman, and what these two did not know about hunting or breeding hounds may be said to be not worth knowing.

Many noted masters of hounds were in the habit of visiting Maer to have a day at the kennels, and see the hounds on the flags, ready to give and acquire valuable information in the art of breeding useful ones. Amongst them were Sir Harry Mainwaring, Sir J. F. Boughey, Lord Hill, Mr. H. Meynell-Ingram, the Duke of Rutland and W. Goodall, his huntsman. To show sport and kill foxes, Mr. Davenport believed in hunting with dogs and bitches mixed, and not as in the present day, with the dogs and bitches separate; the idea being that on a bad scenting day the bitches help the dogs, and on a good one the dogs keep the ladies in check, as they are not so flashy. Of course in open countries this may be somewhat different, but we are writing now of this country. No one who ever heard it could forget the ringing music of old Joe Maiden's voice. Such a one is rarely heard with any pack. One's blood would stir as it cheered a first challenge with, "Have at him there, my lads; hark together!" and then the blast of his horn to bring all his hounds up. Equally so the Master when he hunted hounds, his sharp, clear voice would ring out, followed by the well-known notes on his horn, and put life and vigour into every hound who loved him so. Some few—but, alas! how few!—can remember all this; then, as the cry grew fuller and louder, a clear, long blast would rouse every heart, and merrily indeed the Hunt would sweep along. Miss Davenport (now Lady Manningham Buller) had two favourite horses in Governor and Monarch; Arthur was another, ridden by Miss D. E. Davenport; and Henry Davenport had such horses as the Slasher, on which he won the Christ Church grind in 1866, Monck and Alphæus, and many more good ones. The fine stud of horses (upwards of thirty) was under the charge of Wm. Gething, the stud groom, who was with Mr. Davenport all the years of his mastership, and no man could turn horses out in finer condition or doctor the sick ones better than he could. Wm. Berkshire, who was head man under Gething, rode second horse to the Master, and here again one saw the right man, and always in the right place. Instinct seemed to tell him the shortest way to go, so that the second horse was fresh for the afternoon. In these old Maer days, foxes and pheasants had to live together, and with such keepers as Billy Tatton and "Old Bull," as he was called, they knew well how to keep both in plenty for both Nimrods and Ramrods. At the close of Mr. Davenport's time, his son Henry acted as Master; and it was at this time (1868) that a committee was formed to take over the poultry claims and earth-stopping. The committee consisted of E. T. W. Wood, Tom Cartlich, James Boote, Joseph Cooper, E. Kendrick, George Swift, with Reginald N. Wood as hon. secretary. In that year a subscription was raised of £205 for the purpose of paying poultry claims. Of late, owing to the extra cost of hunting, this sum is more than doubled.

The Covert Fund Committee, only very largely increased in number, and consisting mostly of the leading farmers of the country, has continued up to the present time to work much on the same lines as formerly, the country being divided into districts, and each member takes a certain area in which he resides, so that he is personally acquainted with those claims which come before the committee.

There is an amusing letter written by Mr. Cockburn in 1848, the then owner of Bellaport, to his friend Mr. Henry Clive, of Styche, who was one of the good old sort of English gentlemen fox-hunters. Mr. Cockburn evidently had not much sympathy with fox-hunting, and he wrote to say that he would only allow his coverts to be drawn on certain conditions, his idea being that a fox must be made to go a certain way, and get off his estate as quickly as possible, and on to his neighbours'.

How different this has been at Bellaport in the present owner's time! Mr. Colville, who now owns the estate, is himself fond of hunting and everything connected with sport, and having married Miss Agnes Davenport, who was so well known in the hunting-field as a beautiful horsewoman, the Bellaport coverts became a tower of strength to the Hunt, and often gave us a good gallop in the afternoon on the Wóore side.

Mr. Henry Clive, to whom Mr. Cockburn's letter was written, was one of Mr. Davenport's best supporters. He was a fine rider, and one of the great features of his riding was, you never saw much of him in a run, but as soon as hounds checked he was there. He took his own line over a country, and was not looking to others to pilot him.

Another good sportsman about this time was the Rev. Henry White, of Charnes. He was fond of hunting and seeing his friends, whom he entertained most hospitably; but the peculiarity about his style of riding was, that as soon as hounds went away from a covert with a fox, Mr. White generally put his horse's head in the opposite direction. It used to be a great joke, on meeting him out hunting, to consult him about the weather. The first man would say, "Good morning, Mr. White; we shall have a fine day, and seems like a good scenting one." Mr. White would answer, "I don't think so; looks more like rain and a bad scent." The second man, "Good morning, Mr. White; I fear we shall have a wet day and a bad scent." Mr. White would remark, "I think it looks more like being fine, and a good scent." You never could get him to agree with you on these subjects, but he had his good points, and one was being able to preach a good sermon.

Mr. Tom Adderley, of Barlaston, was one of the young Staffordshire hunting squires of a genial hospitable type. He kept a pack of harriers for some years at Barlaston, and showed plenty of sport in his own neighbourhood, besides hunting regularly with the North Staffordshire Hounds. Jack Hocknell was huntsman to his harriers, and great fun they used to have. There was no barbed wire then, and not many hunting wickets, and if you wanted to see sport and hounds run you had to sit down and ride, and if you took a toss, take Tom Drake's advice he gave to a friend one day out with the Grafton. The friend was riding a four-year-old, and, the horse taking off too soon, they both came a real ender; the horse getting away first, the horseman started off to run and catch him. He was told afterwards by Mr. Drake, who saw the fall, "Take my advice—never get up and run after a horse, or no one will catch him for you, but lie on the ground and holloa, and then some one is sure to come to your help." This advice is worth remembering.

Mr. Thomas Cartlich, of Woore, was another of our good old sportsmen, and did as much as any one to preserve foxes in the Woore country. A farmer complained to him that a fox had taken some of his fowls. He quietly remarked, "You should rear a few extra for them." On one occasion the late Lord Shrewsbury, grandfather of the present Earl, finishing his day's sport at Woore, and wishing to go to Maer, Mr. Cartlich suggested he should drive him, and his Lordship accepted the kind offer. Afterwards Lord Shrewsbury told the story, which amused him very much, of how Mr. Cartlich urged on his animal by remarking, "Come up, old horse; it's not every day you have the premier earl behind you."

# CHAPTER III.

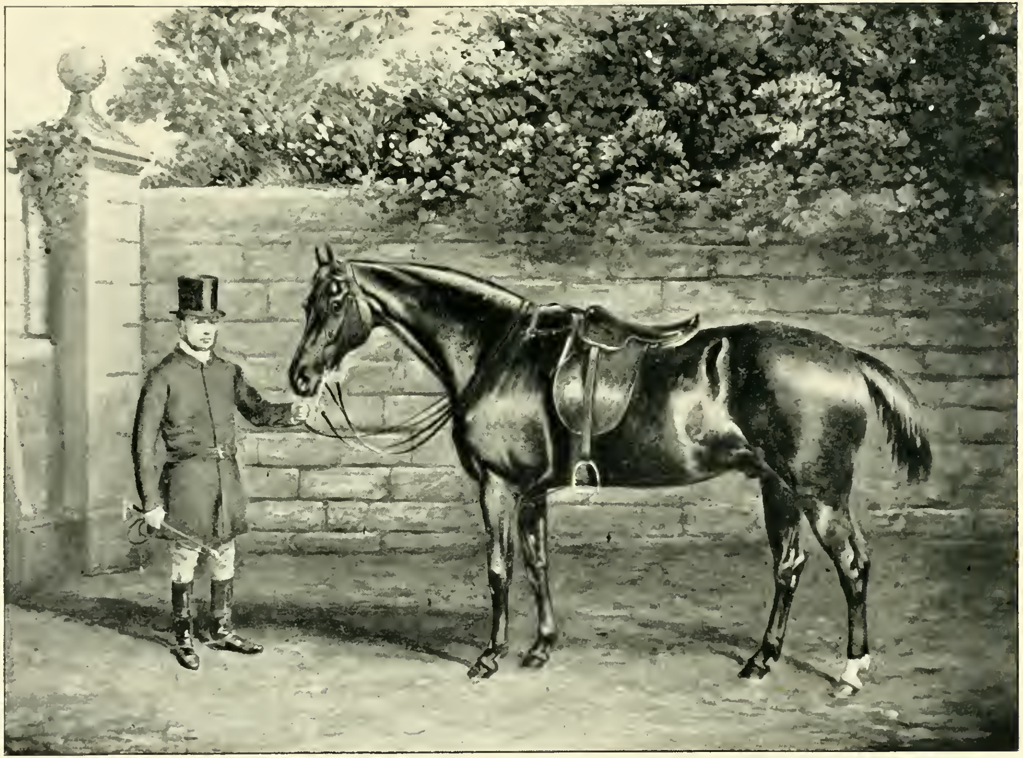
## RUNS DURING MR. DAVENPORT'S MASTERSHIP, FROM 1847 TO 1868—JOE MAIDEN—HIS RETIREMENT AND DEATH.

We must now proceed to give some account of good sport with the North Staffordshire Hounds in Mr. Davenport's time, the writer only regretting that comparatively few records of good runs have been recovered. Maiden's diary entries were generally very brief, but, fortunately, certain sportsmen have occasionally rushed into print in the local and sporting papers, and through the courtesy of the proprietors of the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, and other friends, we are able to record in these pages some at least of the numerous good things enjoyed under Mr. Davenport's auspices. It will be remembered that Joe Maiden joined the North Staffordshire Hunt in 1846–47.

The following is an account of a very good day in his first season :—

From *Bell's Life*, February, 1847.

"Mr. Editor,—Having long felt a desire to look at this pack under the guidance of Joe Maiden, who, to my delight and that of others, so many years hunted the Cheshire, I put my horse and myself on the train to Crewe, the meet being at Sir J. Broughton's at Doddington, about five miles from the station. On my arrival at the meet I found but a small muster, owing, I suppose, to two other packs meeting within a short distance. The Master had not arrived, and thus I was afforded an opportunity of inspecting the hounds, and I need scarcely say that their condition did credit to old Joe, whose skill as a huntsman, whether in the kennel or in the field, in my humble judgment, stands unrivalled. At a quarter to eleven there was a move to the Forge Wood, and immediately the hounds were put in there was that merry sound which tells an old sportsman Reynard is at home. He broke immediately, going for Wybunbury, but suddenly turned to the right over Blakeley (Blakenhall?) Moss to the railway, which he



MR. DAVENPORT'S FAVOURITE HUNTER "SAMBO" AND WILLIAM BERKSHIRE, SECOND HORSEMAN.

*Photo by E. Seeley, Notting Hill.*

ran for half a mile, and then to Batesley Heath, where he was run into after a splendid run of thirty-five minutes. The hounds were then taken to Wybunbury Moss, which was drawn blank, as also Doddington; then to Harrow's Wood, where a gallant fox immediately broke cover, going for Doddington. Near Bridgemere he turned back and ran for Woore, leaving the Canridden on the right in the line for Burnt Woods. Up to Mucklestone bridge the pace had been tremendous, and those who were not lucky enough to have their second horses were tailed off, leaving a very few to tell of the sequel. Here the fox changed his course, bearing to the left by Winnington over Lea Head and Aston Cliff to the Bittern's Wood, where he was viewed, the hounds close at him. Tacking about here, he headed for Maer Hills, in which he never stopped, but on by Chorlton to Swinchurch, where he turned back, and at Chorlton the hounds came to a check for the first time. Maiden, who had gone well through the run on his second horse, found him quite done; but, fortunately, the lad who was on the horse he had been riding in the first run came up, and, having changed his nag, he made a judicious cast, recovered his fox going for Swynnerton Park, within two fields of which he was pulled down, after as good a run as it has been my fortune in twenty-five years to witness. Time, two hours forty minutes; distance, about sixteen miles from point to point, about thirty miles of country. Too much praise cannot be awarded to old Joe for the admirable condition in which he brought his hounds into the field, and his wonderful skill in hunting them over this woodland country. He was well mounted, having two firstrate horses out, and goes ahead as well as in his early days.

"Yours, etc.,
"TALLYHO."

Maiden's short account of this day's sport in his diary reads as follows: "Fast forty minutes and killed. Found again Harrow's Wood; by Barr Hill through Maer Hills, by Chapel Chorlton and Stableford, and killed close to Swynnerton Park. Two hours and forty minutes."

On March 16th, 1849, meet Siddington Toll Bar, Maiden records in his diary: "Found at Cock's Moss. Ran through North Rode Park and Swythamley Park, and killed at Beck Forest Bottom. Two hours and fifteen minutes. Distance, fifteen miles as crow flies."

This must have been an exceptionally good run, and through an unusual line of country, finishing not very far from Macclesfield. It is to be regretted that we have not been able to discover any detailed account of this run. The *Vates sacer* appears to have been decidedly more scarce in the forties than in more modern times. On December 20th, 1849, Maiden also records an old-fashioned hunting run: "From the Big Wood at Trentham away over Tittensor Common by Yarnfield. Changed foxes near

Norton Bridge, thence through Yarlet Hill, Aston, and to ground in the Pilstones. Time, four hours and a half."

February 17th, Seighford: "Found several foxes, and after running them for two hours, settled to one at ten minutes to three o'clock. Ran by Chebsey, Slindon, Standon Hall; then ran a ring through Bromley Woods and Charnes, and thence to Maer, where hounds had to be stopped at ten minutes to six, owing to darkness."

In 1851, on October 29th, we find the following entry: "Met at Seighford; found in the Moor Covert; ran through Ranton, Knighton, twice through Aqualate, and then over the Newport Railway, and killed close to Lindow Rough. Time, two hours. Mr. Taylor's grey horse, which Tom was riding, died after the run."

On December 14th, 1852, the meet was Weston Coyney. "Found in Caverswall Wood. Ran through Dilhorn, the Shawe Coverts, and Froghall, killing him at Consall. Time, two hours and fifteen minutes. Distance covered, twenty-five miles."

We think Maiden must have unconsciously exaggerated the distance. He was rather out of his beat, this being an unusual line for foxes to take. From point to point it would not exceed seven miles, and it does not seem likely that the most ringing of foxes could turn this into twenty-five. Moreover, the country in question is very hilly, and it would be impossible to travel that distance in the time; but evidently it was a good sporting run.

December 14th, 1854, Seighford. "Found on the Eccleshall side. Ran through the Moor Covert by Stafford Castle, then pointed for the Whittimores, but, turning to the left by Moss Pits, killed him at Ash Flats. Time, one hour and fifteen minutes. Racing pace."

The following runs are also worthy of notice:—January 5th, 1854, Woore: "Found in Canridden, ran through Bellaport, Knighton, Willoughbridge, Blackbrook, and, skirting Bromley Coppice, killed near Standon Hall. Time, one hour and twenty minutes." On February 25th, in the same year, the meet was again at Woore, and this time a fox took them from Harrow's Wood, by Madeley Mill, and back to Barr Hill, thence to Hayes Sprink, through Whitmore Wood and by Whitmore to Bentilee, and back through Whitmore Wood and on to Hill Chorlton and Stableford, and eventually lost near Maer, after a run of two hours and forty minutes. On December 18th, 1854, a real, straight-necked fox was found in the Harley Thorn, who took them through Beech Cliff, Tittensor Common, Darlaston Wood, Shallowford Gorse, over Yarlet Hill, and was eventually lost, after a run of about three hours, near the Stafford Asylum, owing to frost setting in. Doddington was the fixture for February 16th, 1856, and on that day a fox was found in Checkley Wood, who ran through Harrow's Wood, Golling's Rough, Betton Moss, crossed the canal near Tunstall, and, leaving Market Drayton on the left, was lost near Hodnet, the distance gone over having been about seventeen miles. On December 10th Mr. Davenport met at Hinstock, which, together with Stoke Heath, appears to have been among his regular meets. A fox which they found in the plantations at Hinstock gave his pursuers a two hours and thirty minutes' run to Acton Reynald, about seven miles from Shrewsbury.

The following account of a good day from Draycot is from the *Field* of February 23rd, 1856 :—

"Mr. Editor,—We often see an account in your paper of a run with the North Warwickshire, but very rarely hear of the doings of the North Staffordshire. This arises, I fancy, not from a dearth of sport with the latter, but for want of a sporting chronicler who can and will be at the trouble of giving you and your readers the benefit of their doings. 'With the wind at north-east and forbiddingly keen,' we don't often witness a really good day's sport with foxhounds, though harriers will sometimes run breast-high and frighten poor puss to death. It was our good luck, however, on Wednesday last (20th) to have as good a day with Mr. Davenport's pack as we usually get under the most favourable circumstances. The meet was Draycot village. The wind was not only north-east, but the air frosty in the extreme—so much so that many thought it useless going to the meet, and others merely rode over for the exercise, scarcely expecting to find the hounds there.

"The worthy Master was first upon the ground, and in due course the pack were trotted quietly up. 'Hardly fit for hunting this morning,' says one. 'Play the devil with horses' legs and feet,' says another. 'Then what becomes of the hounds' feet?' says a third. A shrug of the shoulders and a significant shake of the head is the only response to these surmises. But all doubt was quickly cleared up, for the gallant Master, bent on sport himself, and seeing a tidy smattering of pink jackets, to say nothing of a few of the right sort in black, gave the word, and we were soon on the move for Draycot Woods, in the first of which we found almost directly; but, being unable. after dodging about for some time, to make anything of our customer, we gave him up and trotted on to Bromley Wood, where one of a better sort was viewed crossing a ride, and the hounds being 'halloo'd' on to him without loss of time, he broke away at once with his head for Chartley, but being unfortunately headed back into cover, he broke again at the opposite corner and went at a rattling pace up to Fulford, which he left a little to the right, and presently reached the Sandon and Leek road. We were no sooner over the 'pike' than the hounds settled down again to their work, and went better than we have often known to be the case 'with a southerly wind and a cloudy sky.' Leaving Hilderstone in the rear on our left, he crossed the hills and dales till we found ourselves in the Hardiwick plantations near Sandon. Here there was little or no check of consequence, for our fox was evidently a game one, and was no doubt considerably aided in his laudable efforts to show sport by the keen bracing air which swept across the hills. Having got well clear of the plantations, he bore to the left, leaving Sandon on the right. and after a severe gallop over some very uneven ground, we reached Sherratt's Wood in Leigh parish. This he merely entered, and, turning to the right, seemed for a time inclined to visit Chartley Park; but a second thought seized him, or perhaps hearing the hounds too near his brush to be agreeable, turned homewards again, and, after crossing a long range of country, reached Hilderstone Hall. Up to this point there was very little breathing time, and we had once run him in view across a drumble near Milwich, but on reaching the lane near the Bird-in-Hand we lost him, and all chance of picking his bones seemed gone. By means of a judicious cast made by the gallant Master—whom we were glad to see not only hunting his own pack in the absence of Maiden, but always well forward—the hounds once more 'hit it off,' and settled down upon the scent, which they carried on in spite of wind and weather, roads and lanes, up to Fulford and through the Stallington covers into Moddershall Oaks, near Stone, where the gallant pack were seen dodging him about when the writer of this left. Of those who went well perhaps the most noticeable of all was a youth on a racing pony (which had evidently seen hounds before), who, notwithstanding the length and severity of the run, contrived to keep a good place throughout.

"Yours, etc.,

"VERAX."

The above run is thus briefly described in Joe Maiden's diary: "Found in Bromley Wood, ran through Hardwick Heath, Hilderstone, Birchwood Park, Sherratt's Wood, and by the Bird-in-Hand to Moddershall Oaks, where he was lost owing to fresh foxes getting on foot. Time, four hours."

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, November 29th, 1856:

"These hounds had an excellent run on Monday last. The meet was Dilhorn Hall, and the morning was the very reverse of what a sportsman could have wished—stormy and windy beyond description—so much so that it could not he expected hounds would be heard many yards off. After the preliminaries in the shape of hospitality had been indulged *quantum suff.*, the pack was trotted off and thrown into the large covers lying at a little distance in front of the hall. A blank is never now thought of at Dilhorn, and although the gamest fox might have been excused for seeking shelter from the howling blasts of the preceding night, 'Mr. Reynolds' was there to receive his friends. We were soon at work in cover, but not so soon out of it, for he took a long time to make up his mind whether it would be safe to trust himself in the open under the howling of such a pitiless sky. At last, however, he stole away, before half the field were aware what had happened, setting his head for Consall Woods, but he soon found that a fearful 'nor-wester' hit him plump in the chops, and he tacked about to the right and ran the whole range of what is called the 'Above Park Quarter' of the parish of Cheadle, passing over the Hazlewall and Booth Hall farms, and then entered Kingsley parish, visiting the preserves of Mr. Beech, of the Shawe, passing on by Broad Hay and Lockwood to Woodhead and Woodhouse, where he might have dropped into the Churnet Valley and found plenty of shelter, but he bore away to the right until we reached a high ridge of land to the east of Cheadle, known as the High Shutt, where a magnificent view opened upon our sight of Alton Towers in the distance, the princely abode of the Earls of Shrewsbury. Of course the Alton covers were too tempting to be altogether passed by, and after a good deal of hard and heavy riding, we were evidently in for a little cover hunting, but still 'forward' was the cry, and on we swept o'er hill and dale until we breasted the Oakamoor Hills. Here an adventure well-nigh befell 'Mr. Reynolds,' which happily very few knew anything about. He was viewed by an unlucky wight, whose name it might not be safe (for him) to mention, when, without time for a second thought, he popped into his cottage, brought down a gun, and actually let fly a charge of shot at him, but luckily without any very serious effect, for, to the fellow's great astonishment, in a few minutes after this base attempt on a game and gallant animal the hounds were heard in full cry in front of Oakamoor Lodge. Whether he lost time in trying to extract some of the shot is not known, but the hounds were soon close up to his quarters, and after running him very hard for several miles further, he went to ground near the Churnet Valley, with the gallant pack close to his brush."

## From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, December 26th, 1857 :

"On Thursday, the 17th inst., the Hunt met at Barlaston Hall, where, after partaking of a liberal spread by the worthy host, they went to work, and sure enough it proved work in earnest. They first drew Barlaston Wood, then Newpark Gorse, where Reynard was found. He went away to Barlaston village, running a ring to the Downs Banks, thence to Oulton, where he doubled back to Barlaston; then, retracing his steps, ran to Moddershall Oaks, where he would not dwell; going straight through, he left it with the hounds about two hundred yards from his brush. Here the pace became very severe, casualties very common, and plenty of horses were soon to let. He then ran through Spot Gorse, pointing for Draycot; leaving Hilderstone to the right and Oulton Hall to the left, ran direct for Sandon Woods, but, being pressed, got into Hardiwick Heath. Three times he tried on the double in this covert, but the hounds had got on too good terms with him to part company. He then tried Orange Hayes, but with no better success, having to leave it as quickly as he entered, doubling back by Stone Park, through Cotwalton Drumbles to Spot Gate; then through the top end of Moddershall Oaks and Stallington, leaving Fulford on the left, ran to Draycot, through the Hose Wood, New Close Sprink, and the Gorse, pointing for Birchwood Park up to Leigh Station, near which they ran into him after crossing nearly forty miles of country within five and a half hours. Every horse and man being completely beat, the hounds had him to themselves for some short time, during which some countryman coolly cut off his brush and bolted. None but the few who were best mounted could possibly show up at the last, and although a large field at the start, the numbers were reduced to about half a dozen, amongst whom we noticed the gallant Master, Mr. Davenport, and his son. The latter, though young in years, showed that he was of the right material, and bids well to sustain the celebrity of his sire. Colonel Coote Buller, Mr. Walter Coyney, and the second whip were amongst the few. Miss Davenport rode to the tail of the hounds, and long after many a veteran sportsman was laid low was she to be seen in the front rank. Such was the inherent pluck of Mr. Davenport and his son, that for the last few fields they left their wearied horses and ran in to the finish."

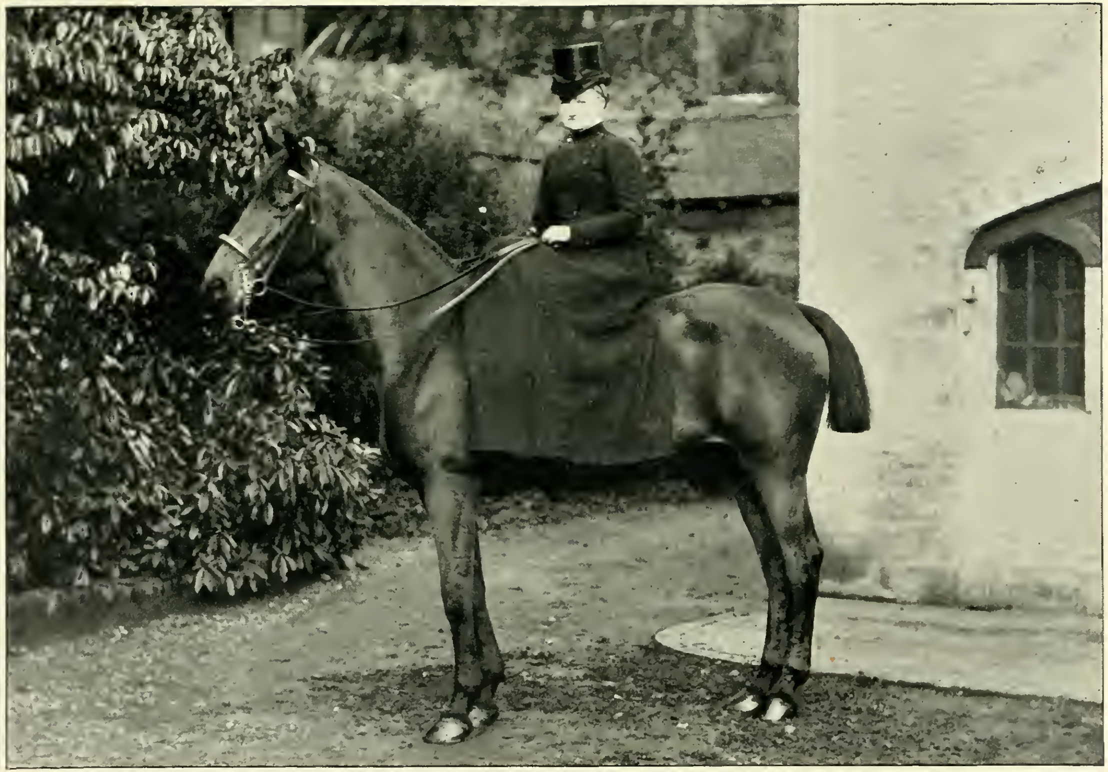
### From the *Derbyshire Advertiser*, January, 1858:

"The North Staffordshire Foxhounds, which a correspondent informs us have had some excellent sport up to the present time, paid an unexpected visit to Derbyshire on Friday last.

"The meet was Croxden Abbey, and the frost had broken up so abruptly that few were prepared for the occasion, or, rather, hardly expected there would be 'a meet,' and the consequence was that only half a score gentlemen of the immediate neighbourhood turned up to enjoy one of the prettiest things of the season.

"The generous hospitality so proverbial about Croxden having been freely discussed and fully appreciated, a move was made for the covers lying south of the old Abbey, and in 'Chipperlee' the 'varmint' was found at home, but soon broke away towards Pointhorn and ran close up to the village of Alton, where he probably heard a whisper about the unsettled state of things at the present time, for, making a turn, he set his head for the Dove Valley, and, crossing the Churnet and Dove below Woodseat, crossed the meadows for Eaton Woods, which he passed right through, and went for Somersal, the pace at times being quite fast enough to be agreeable, and at others slow but sure. At one time it seemed that Cubley Gorse or Sudbury Coppice was his point; but, his ideas getting rather confused, he ran round towards Doveridge, and once more took us into the Dove meadows, and, crossing the Dove again, set his head right for the Forest Banks, and thence to Bagot's Park, where the gallant pack were whipped off with a fair prospect before them of picking up their game. Although the company was more select than numerous, they were all of the right sort, and rode at times with more pluck than judgment, for one of the party, in his determination to be with the hounds, swam the river Dove in preference to going out of his line to a more fordable part. Mr. Davenport seemed vastly pleased with the manner in which the hounds did their work, and was heard to say that he should visit this side of the country more frequently."

### From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, February 28th, 1859:



MISS DAVENPORT ON "LADY GODIVA."

*From a photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

## THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

It has been tritely remarked by a veteran sportsman, that fox-hunting was one of the few pleasures worth living for. On Monday last (so says our sporting correspondent) this saying was truly verified. The weather was splendid, the meet numerous yet select, and the run a regular "clipper."

The meet was at Draycot, and there were present the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Bagot, Sir W. FitzHerbert, Ladies Gertrude and Adelaide Talbot, Miss Adderley, some few of the Cheshire sportsmen, most of the neighbouring squires, and a good sprinkling of the farmers of the district, showing that in their opinion a pack of foxhounds was amongst their best friends. Reynard was found in Bromley Wood, and in his first attempt to break cover was headed. He then tried round the wood, and in his second effort made good his point, getting away with hounds at his brush through Fulford, Spot Gorse, Stallington, Hilderstone to Moddershall Oaks, where he tried on the double, but the hounds never left him a moment for reflection, and brought him again to the open at a killing pace. Here most of the knowing ones, and two-thirds of the field, were left behind, as nothing but the best generalship and a bit of luck could keep up. Reynard ran a ring back to Hilderstone, then took his old line to Draycot through the wood he started from, pointing for Cresswell, where he was run into dead beat, after one hour and twenty-five minutes without a check. The brush was gallantly and deservedly given by the Master to Miss Adderley, who rode throughout in her usual spirited style, the ground gone over being about fifteen miles of a stiff country, with lots of plough and very hilly.

On Wednesday the meet was at Betley, and a splendid day's sport it proved to those fortunate enough to be present. Reynard number one was found in the New Gorse, when, after a fast forty minutes' run, he was killed in the open. Then trotting off to Balterley Moss, Reynard number two was found at home, and very little time was lost in making his acquaintance, when off he went towards Doddington, followed by the pack and hunters at a rattling pace; then, turning to his left through Wrinehill and Checkley Woods, he tried the open for the Woore country, but, finding himself pressed, he beat a retreat to Wrinehill Woods, where his pursuers dusted him about, never leaving him for a moment. Again he tried his point for Woore, but with no better success, and was run into near Woore, after a severe chase of two hours and a half, men, horses, and hounds all evidently having had enough of it.

## From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, March 15th, 1862:

## THREE DAYS WITH THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

*Monday*, 10*th*.—Met at Black Brook. Drew Willoughbridge Wood, where we soon found "the varmint," and after dusting him about a short time, he broke cover with the hounds at his brush, affording the spectators a pretty "run in view," made his point to the Forty Acres, thence over Ashley Heath through the Burntwoods for the Rudge, where he was headed by some ploughmen, then turning to the right by Fair Oak for Charnes, near which he was run into. Time, one hour ten minutes.

*Tuesday*, 11*th*.—A "bye day." Found at Bromley Coppice, and ran a perfect steeplechase for twenty minutes through Podmore village, picking him up as he entered the New Gorse at Maer. Then trotted off to the hills, from which we had a capital run of one hour and a quarter, through Radwood, leaving Aston Cliffe to the left, over the brook by the Bitterns, across Barr Hill, pointing for Wrinehill, through Vickers Beech, Onneley, and Woore; then to the left through Gravenhunger, by Moor Hall to Aston, where he took refuge in a bakehouse oven, which afforded him but little respite, as the pack soon marked his whereabouts, and, one of them, bounding into the oven, soon dislodged him, but in making his exit he met with a warm reception, having to jump into the mouths of his pursuers.

*Thursday*, 13*th*.—Met at Draycot. Found in the Hose Wood, one of the right sort. He went away at a clipping pace through Bromley Wood, leaving the Ox Leasows on the right by Spot Gate, running close to Moddershall, then to the left by Cotwalton, across Hardiwick Heath, pointing for Sandon, then to the right by Burston, through the Hollywood, leaving Hilderstone on the right by the Bird-in-Hand, Sherratt's Wood, and Oulton House, to Orange Hayes, where they whipped off, after running nearly three hours over a heavy country with stiff fences, and the pace good. The horses, what few were left, were dead beat, and many a good 'un "had long before had enough."

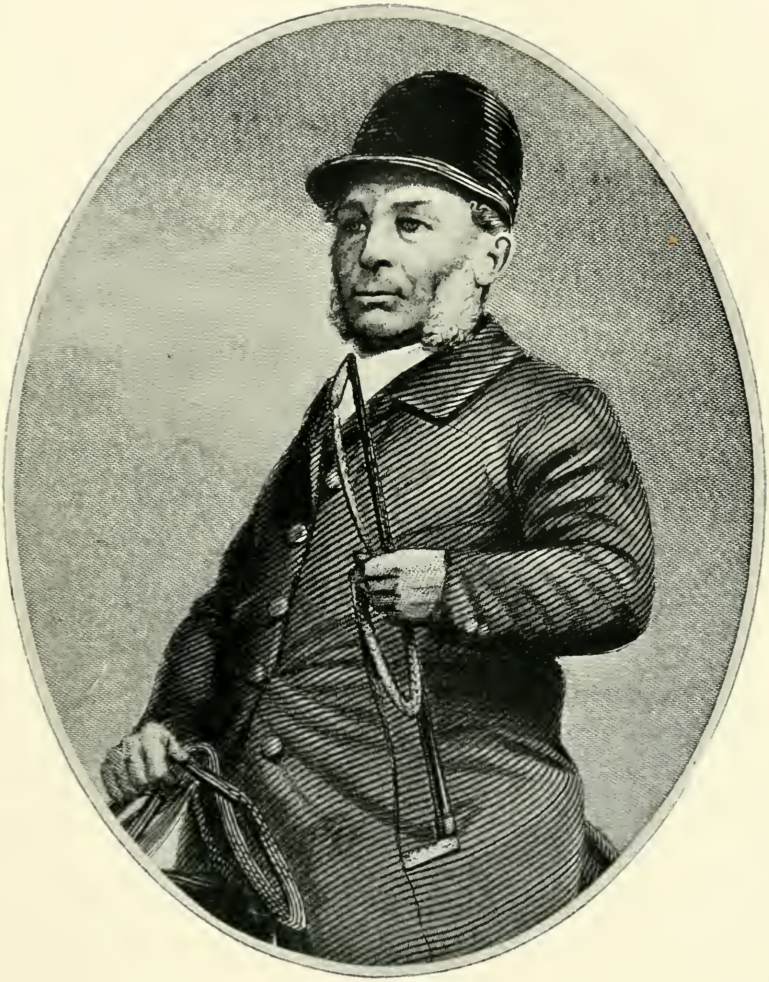
## From the *Field*, February 13th, 1863:

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

This pack met on Wednesday last at Whitmore Station, where they had an excellent day's sport, the pleasure being much heightened by again seeing the Master in the pigskin, and it proved one of the best scenting days of the season. The first fox was found in Hay Sprink, which cover he never left, and although the ground must have been foiled over, they never checked, killing in fifteen minutes a fine dog fox. They next found at the New Gorse, Maer Hall, a stout 'un, and one of the right sort. He went away merrily for Standon Rough, then, turning through Shortwood, went back to Maer Hills, where he was allowed no respite; again taking the open, and making almost the same ring as before, evidently trying for the second time to get back to the gorse he had first left, this being situated on a hill, but the pace he had then gone for sixty-five minutes no doubt prevented his accomplishing it. He then pointed for Swynnerton Park, bearing to the right for Hatton Bogs, but was too closely pressed to dwell, and. after another ring, got back to the cover he was found in, on entering which he was picked up by the gallant pack, after a run of one hour and forty minutes, comparatively speaking unassisted and without a check. From the elevated ground at the finish might be seen the jaded steeds tailing off, some one or two miles, the pace, considering the state of the ground, having been very severe. The pack was hunted by Joe Maiden, who had rather a singular mishap in the middle of the run, riding with his neck against a clothes-line with such force as to break the cord, and, as the veteran jocularly remarked, proving that he was not born for the noose.

It is noteworthy that this was Maiden's last good day with the hounds. He retired next month, at the conclusion of the season, and died on October 20th, 1864, in his seventieth year.

There are few huntsmen who have earned a higher



JOE MAIDEN, HUNTSMAN TO "THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE."

*From an engraving.*

reputation or have been more widely known than Joe Maiden, and from all accounts he must have well deserved his fame. He was evidently a splendid kennel manager, a straightforward, upright servant, a zealous and persevering huntsman in the field, a good rider to hounds in spite of his terrible accident and his consequent loss of limb, and a courteous and civil official to all the members of the Hunt. He must have had some drawbacks, no doubt, but the present writer (who had not any adequate opportunities of forming a judgment of his methods) is unable to point them out, and such inquiries as he has been able to make have generally resulted in unqualified commendation.

Warburton—no bad judge—says of him in his capacity of huntsman to the Cheshire Hounds, "As far as my experience extends, I have never seen his equal." He also prints in the notes to the hunting songs a rather pathetic letter from old Maiden, written in November, 1862, in which the retiring huntsman says—

> "These hounds will be leaving here (Wolstanton) shortly to go to Trentham, the seat of the Duke of Sutherland. I don't go with them. I shall stop here the winter, and I don't intend going with hounds any more. I have rheumatic very bad at times, and cannot ride to hounds, this being my fifty-fourth season with hounds. I have a very good entry, and they are all going on well."

In 1865, for the first time, Mr. Davenport accepted a subscription from the members of the Hunt, and as a subscription pack the North Staffordshire Hounds were continued until Mr. Davenport's retirement and death, in 1869. Colonel Coote Buller was the first hon. secretary, and retained office until his death, in 1868, being succeeded by Mr. Egerton Harding, who was followed by the Rev. Charles H. Mainwaring, of Whitmore, who held office until 1873–74.

In the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, November 18th, 1865, a correspondent writes—

> "On Wednesday last the fixture was Draycot, whence the hounds trotted to Hose Wood, which, with New Close Sprink and Bromley Wood, was drawn blank. We then went back to Stallington, where we found a fox which brought us straight back for the Hose Wood, through which he went up to Sherratt'

Wood, through Birchwood Park up to Chartley, leaving the Park to the right, through the Shaw, thence across for Gratwich, leaving the wood on the left, across the river Blythe, up to Kingstone Wood, thence up the meadows by Callow Hill to Stansby Wood, straight over Blithfield Park, and through Blithe Moor, up to Stephen's Hill, thence to Stockwell Heath, between which and a covert called the Black Flats this gallant animal succumbed, after a run of two hours and twenty minutes.

"Up to Chartley the scent was indifferent, and the pace consequently slow, but we then got on better terms with him, and from Chartley to the finish it was all that we could wish. The distance from point to point cannot be much less than fifteen miles perfectly straight, as we found not far from Blythe Bridge Station, and killed between Colton and Blithbury, thus happily proving that the race of wild foxes is not yet extinct in Staffordshire. Tom Atkinson, the huntsman, handled his hounds in a most workmanlike manner through this great run, much to the satisfaction of Mr. Davenport and his friends."

## From the *Derbyshire Advertiser*, February, 1866 :

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE FOXHOUNDS.

By some blunder, though not of ours, for the information came in the usual course from headquarters, these hounds were advertised in our last impression to meet on Wednesday instead of Thursday, at Draycot village, and we fear some of our readers may in consequence have suffered disappointment, for we understand that they had excellent sport on the latter day, finding their first fox in Hose Wood, running him through New Close Sprink into the Blythe Meadows, and killing him in the Wing plantation near Heybridge, after a sharp burst of some twenty minutes. They then trotted off in search of another, and found one of a more lasting sort, which led them a dance into the Chartley country, going right across the park, and then turning to the left, through the Hand Leasows Wood, and down the hollow to Gratwich Wood, thence over the Blythe up to Leese Hill, as though his point was Kingstone Wood and Bagot's Park; but, turning to the left, he made for the Loxley coverts, crossing the park and passing near the hall, and was pulled down between there and Uttoxeter, after a good hunting run of an hour and a half.

## From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, January 23rd, 1868 :

"The North Staffordshire Hounds met at Trentham Kennels on Thursday, when there was a very large muster, amongst whom were Lord Tarbat, Mr. Johnstone, and others from the Hall. There was a good turn-out of the neighbouring gentry and ladies, including Mr. H. Davenport, the Misses Davenport, Messrs. Buller, Mr. White, Messrs. Copeland, Messrs. Wood (Watlands), Messrs. Hollins, Captain Heath, and many others, numbering upwards of a hundred. Besides the equestrians, there were a large number of carriages and vehicles of all classes, and many pedestrians (the latter estimated at upwards of three hundred). No doubt this large gathering was owing to a report being spread that the Prince of Wales was expected at the meet.

"The large cavalcade moved on through the village, taking the inhabitants quite by surprise, to New Park, where they found almost directly. The fox, however, turned out to be a 'bad 'un,' like many others found this season, and after the usual dodging about, as if after a bagman, the hounds were taken away to Downs Banks, where they found one of a better class, which gave a ring or two round, and then went off by Meaford Hall, up the meadows at a rattling pace to Hey Fields, where they pulled him down in the open, after a smart run of twenty-five minutes. The hounds were then taken back to the Banks again, but no other being found 'at home,' they moved on to Moddershall. There they were again successful. Reynard, after taking a turn or two round the cover, made for Black Lake, by the windmill, and on towards the Meir, turned to the right by Stallington Grange and the Hall towards Fulford, and then back in the direction of Stallington, near which place he was run into. It was a fair day's sport considering the number out. The North Staffordshire have had some first-rate sport lately, killing plenty of foxes."

# CHAPTER IV.

## JOINT MASTERSHIP OF THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY AND CAPTAIN NUGENT.

IN consequence of Mr. Davenport's intimation that he had decided to give up the Mastership at the end of the season 1868–69, the members of the Hunt held a meeting, which is thus reported in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of 22nd May, 1869 :

"A meeting of gentlemen interested in the hunting of the North Staffordshire country was held at the Railway Hotel, Stoke-upon-Trent, on Wednesday afternoon. The Earl of Shrewsbury presided, and there were also present, Colonel Buller, Mr. Egerton Harding, Mr. Henry Davenport, Captain Hyde Smith, Mr. M. D. Hollins, Mr. H. T. Davenport, Mr. R. N. Wood, Captain Buchanan, Mr. Morton Buller, Mr. W. Heath, Mr. Boote, Mr. Cartlich, etc. Lord Shrewsbury, in opening the meeting, stated that some time since he had a correspondence with Mr. Davenport, of Maer, respecting the disposal of the pack of hounds of which he had expressed his wish to resign the Mastership; but nothing was done at that time, because Mr. Davenport did not like to take any decisive step in the absence from the country of the Duke of Sutherland, who had always been a liberal supporter of the pack. His (Lord Shrewsbury's) idea was that it would be desirable for North and South Staffordshire to combine, in order that the old pack, which was a very valuable one, might be saved to the county. He was willing to purchase the hounds, and lend them to the county, if an adequate subscription were entered into to keep them going. The South Staffordshire gentlemen thought, however, that it was undesirable, on account of the peculiarly narrow formation of the county at the centre, that there should be only one pack within its borders, considering that it would promote sport and save expense and trouble, if both packs were retained. That being the case, it was for this meeting to consider what course to adopt. Colonel Buller spoke in warm terms of the obligation which the county was under to Mr. Davenport, of Maer; and he then made various suggestions as to the securing of the North Staffordshire pack, which is advertised to be sold by auction in June, and concluded by saying that Lord Shrewsbury would give £250 towards the purchase-money. A conversation was then held as to the best mode of obtaining and hunting the pack, and ultimately an arrangement to the following effect was come to: 'That a subscription should be entered into for the purchase of the hounds, and that Mr. Henry Davenport should act as Master, with a Committee of Management to conduct the business of the Hunt.'

"A subscription list was then sent round the room, and donations amounting to £580 were promised. In addition to this, it was stated that the Duke of Sutherland would subscribe £500 a year towards the expenses, and let the Hunt have the kennels at Trentham, and two cottages rent free. Mr. H. Davenport observed that he would not undertake any part of the responsibility of management, but he would be happy to act as Master, and subscribe £50 a year, and find his own horses.

"The following gentlemen were nominated on the Committee of Management: the Duke of Sutherland and Mr. H. Davenport, *ex officio*; the Earl of Shrewsbury, Mr. Basil Fitzherbert, Mr. J. W. Philips, Mr. M. E. Buller, and Mr. Cartlich. Mr. Egerton Harding kindly undertook to continue his services as hon. secretary, and the hope was very generally expressed that the interests of the Hunt would be considered by the careful preservation of foxes. A subscription was also announced for the presentation of a testimonial to Atkinson, the huntsman, and a Committee was formed to solicit subscriptions. The meeting was then closed by a vote of thanks to Lord Shrewsbury, who, in acknowledging the compliment, said he was very fond of the country, and desired to do his duty by it. He knew of nothing which better fostered a friendly feeling, and softened down the differences of political life, than the hunting of a good pack of hounds, and he was happy to see so good a chance of the North Staffordshire pack being re-established."

When the sale of Mr. Davenport's hounds took place, on June 30th, most of the best hounds were secured by the Committee on behalf of the Hunt; and, after some correspondence and negotiations, the late Earl of Shrewsbury came forward and undertook to hunt the country with the aid of Captain (afterwards Colonel) Nugent as joint Master. Clarke, who had been huntsman with the Duke of Beaufort, was engaged as huntsman, but he only remained one season, and then transferred his services to the Roman Foxhounds. Tom Jennings, who had been first whip to Clarke, was entrusted with the horn when the latter left; but he, too, only remained one season, and was succeeded, in 1871, by Stephen Dickins. The latter was a son of the well-known Atherstone huntsman of that name, and had whipped-in to his father for many years, and had acted as huntsman himself for two or three seasons, leaving the Atherstone only in 1871, the then Master, Mr. Anstruther Thomson, himself taking the horn. Of Dickins we shall often have occasion to speak during the progress of this history; suffice it to say here that he stayed with the North Stafford Hounds from 1871 until his death, in 1896. It was impossible for any huntsman to show better sport than he did, and he most deservedly earned and enjoyed the respect and good opinion of every member of the Hunt, from the noble Master downwards.

The joint Mastership of Lord Shrewsbury and Colonel Nugent continued for two seasons, when the former retired and Colonel Nugent undertook the sole management. This arrangement lasted for three seasons, till 1874, when the Duke of Sutherland (then Marquis of Stafford) took the Mastership, and began his successful career, which has already lasted for twenty-eight years, and it is to be hoped will continue for many years to come.

Before dealing in detail with the history of the present Mastership, let us complete the history of the Hunt from the time of Mr. Davenport's death, in 1869, to the end of Colonel Nugent's tenure of office, in 1874. We may mention that a sum of about £650 was raised amongst the members of the Hunt in shares, in 1869, to purchase the bulk of Mr. Davenport's hounds on behalf of the Hunt; Lord Shrewsbury subscribing £250, Mr. J. W. Philips £100, and other well-known members of the Hunt contributing liberally to the fund. Some seven or eight years afterwards the subscribers presented the hounds to the Master, Lord Stafford, as a mark of appreciation of the style in which he was carrying on the affairs of the Hunt, and in gratitude for the sport he was showing.

Lord Shrewsbury and Captain Nugent had not been in office many months when they found themselves engaged in a dispute with the Cheshire Hunt, who had laid claim to the Doddington coverts, which had been regularly hunted by the North Stafford for very many years.

The Cheshire Hounds hunted the Doddington coverts till 1813, when, in consequence of a dispute with the owner, Sir John Broughton, they were warned off. While

Mr. Wicksted hunted the country, the Doddington coverts were regularly drawn by him. In 1842, during the interregnum that occurred between Sir Thomas Boughey's Mastership (who had succeeded Mr. Wicksted in the Woore country), Sir John allowed the Cheshire to return to them ; but in 1846, owing to another dispute, they were again warned off, and from then till after Mr. Davenport's retirement they were hunted regularly by the North Staffordshire. This dispute was referred to the Fox-hunting Committee of Boodle's Club, and on July 4th, 1870, they published their award, in which they declared that the North Staffordshire Hunt had established their right to the coverts in question.

Among runs and incidents worthy of notice between 1869 and 1874, was one on November 13th, 1871. A fox was found in Shallowford Gorse, who took them through Darlaston Wood, Tittensor Common, Swynnerton old Park, and Maer Hills, and to ground in Willoughbridge —fourteen miles from point to point, and an extraordinary performance, when one considers the big woodlands traversed. Four days later they were running a fox in Wrinehill Wood, when it was deliberately shot in front of the hounds.

On January 27th, 1873, a fox was run seven times from Canridden to Bellaport and back before they succeeded in killing him.

The Members of the Hunt were under a great obligation to the late Lord Shrewsbury for the handsome and liberal manner in which he came to the front at a crisis in the history of the Hunt, on the retirement and subsequent death of Mr. Davenport. The Hunt was very well managed, and the men well mounted, during the joint Mastership of Lord Shrewsbury and Colonel Nugent, and the prestige of the Hunt did not suffer during the three years of the latter's sole Mastership. Good sport was shown, the men and horses were well turned out ; and although we do not find that so many foxes were killed during those few seasons as afterwards, this may be attributed, no doubt, to other causes than any defect in management. Colonel Nugent was a courteous and popular Master, and a sufficiently good horseman, though never a particularly hard man to hounds, and he probably had not had much previous experience of hound-breeding and kennel-management; still he managed the Hunt well, and was much esteemed by the field, who presented him with a testimonial on his retirement. We observe, from Dickins's diaries, that in his first season (1871–72) he only killed twenty-seven foxes, and in his second season forty, and his third thirty; but in those days they only hunted three days a week, and were stopped often by frost. Afterwards, as we shall see, Dickins was able to show greater results, the season of 1883–84, when he accounted for a hundred and one foxes, being his record year. The members of the Hunt, feeling that they owed a great debt of gratitude to Lord Shrewsbury for the generous and spirited support he had given to the North Staffordshire Hunt, invited the noble Earl to a banquet at Stone, in April, 1870, which is reported as follows in the *Staffordshire Advertiser*:—

### COMPLIMENTARY DINNER TO LORD SHREWSBURY.

On Wednesday afternoon the members and supporters of the North Staffordshire Hunt entertained the Earl of Shrewsbury at dinner, in recognition of the generous support he has rendered to the Hunt since the death of the late Mr. Davenport. It will be remembered that at the time of that lamented event the valuable pack of hounds which Mr. Davenport had kept for so many years was put up for sale, and would probably have been lost to the county had not Lord Shrewsbury generously come forward with his assistance, which he has since continued on the most munificent scale. Recently an arrangement has been come to by which £1000 has been guaranteed annually, irrespective of the Duke of Sutherland's and Lord Shrewsbury's subscriptions, but even now a very large proportion of the expense—upwards of £2000—will be borne by the noble earl. It was rightly thought that his lordship's generous exertions should not pass altogether unrecognized, and he having accepted an invitation to dinner, it took place on Wednesday afternoon, at the Town Hall, Stone. J. W. Philips, Esq., of Heybridge, presided, supported by the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Rev. C. H. Mainwaring, Colonel R. Buller, Captain F. Buller, Mr. B. Fitzherbert, Captain Nugent, Mr. R. Wood, Mr. E. Wood, Captain Congreve, Captain Buchanan, and Captain Miller, etc. Mr. Nicklin, of the Crown Inn, provided an excellent dinner.

After the loyal toasts, the Chairman proposed "The Army, Navy, and Reserve Forces," coupling with the toast the name of Colonel Buller.

Colonel Buller, who was very warmly received, acknowledged the toast. He said he had just received a telegram from their gallant friend General Phillips, and he would read it, as he believed the company would appreciate its kindness and cordiality. It was as follows: "Magisterial duties prevent me from being present at your festive scene. The South Staffordshire Hunt are greatly indebted to Lord Shrewsbury for his support. Our thanks are due to him for keeping the country together, and for that very friendly meeting at Ingestre. In the name of the South Staffordshire Hunt, I hope you will convey to the Earl of Shrewsbury and to your party our best wishes. Success to fox-hunting." (Loud applause.)

The Chairman, in appropriate terms, proposed "The Bishop of the Diocese and the Clergy of all Denominations."

The Rev. C. H. Mainwaring, whose name had been coupled with the toast, responded. He said he should make no apology for being seen in the hunting-field or round that festive board. (Hear, hear! and loud applause.) The clergy, like every other class of men, must have their exercise and amusements, and whether they took it in the saddle or with the gun, on the croquet lawn, the archery ground, or in the cricket field, it signified nothing so long as they recruited their bodily energies for their important duties. (Loud applause).

The Chairman proposed "The Lord-Lieutenant and the County Magistrates." He spoke in high terms of the manner in which the Lord-Lieutenant discharged his duties, and observed that to them as fox-hunters the noble earl ought to be especially endeared for the years he had given them the use of Shallowford Gorse. (Hear, hear!) They had had many splendid runs from there, and he only hoped that they would see many more. With the toast he coupled the name of Mr. E. Wood. (Applause.)

Mr. Wood, in acknowledging the toast, observed that he had learnt many lessons in the hunting field from farmers, especially in leaping difficult fences, which would appal many an accomplished horseman.

The Chairman then rose, amid loud and enthusiastic applause, to propose the health of the guest of the evening, the Earl of Shrewsbury. He thought it was a very good omen for this country that so many of her leading men lived for the public, ana did all they could to promote the public good. (Hear, hear!) How great his lordship's services had been was known to them all, and those services sprang from a hearty and generous desire to give pleasure to those in his own neighbourhood and in every district with which he was connected. (Hear, hear!) They were met there that evening to thank him for keeping the old country together, and becoming the second founder of the North Staffordshire Hunt. (Loud applause.) The noble earl entered upon the work with his usual enterprise, and he need not tell them with what heartiness he had carried it on. He had not only contributed most generously to the funds of the Hunt, but had given his personal exertions, having taken an immense amount of trouble—the extent of which was, perhaps, only known to himself (the Earl of Shrewsbury), to secure what they had now—a first-rate hunting establishment in the old country. (Loud applause.) The members of the North Staffordshire Hunt owed a deep debt of gratitude to his lordship, and he was sure that in future days the names of Mr. Davenport and Lord Shrewsbury would be looked back to by their descendants for many generations of fox-hunters with feelings of the deepest gratitude and regard. (Loud applause.)

The toast was drunk by the company standing, with three times three enthusiastic cheers.

The Earl of Shrewsbury, on rising to respond, said he was oppressed with the difficulty of conveying to them in adequate terms his feelings of gratitude for their kind reception, and the handsome and straightforward manner in which they and many absent friends came forward to meet his proposition that the subscription to the Hunt should be made up to what he considered an adequate sum. As he had stated in a correspondence he had had with his friend Mr. Wood, he did not require any other acknowledgment from the Hunt and the county than that response; but he was glad of that opportunity of telling them face to face how deeply grateful he felt to them for the straightforward and honourable manner in which his proposals were met. (Applause.) They must all congratulate themselves on their future prospects, and in connection with the past season there were very many pleasant and agreeable recollections, despite the fact that it was one of the worst seasons he ever remembered as far as the weather was concerned, the frost having interfered with their sport on no less than eighteen or twenty occasions. He trusted they would have a more open season next year. He saw many gentlemen there who had bought horses because they believed the hunt was to be carried on in a proper manner. (Hear, hear!) In addition to the enjoyment in the field, the sport gave them the opportunity of making each other's acquaintance. He believed there was hardly a gentleman round that table whom he had not the privilege of addressing by name—(applause)—and he certainly thought it a very great advantage that men of various classes and opinions should meet together on common ground to enjoy a national sport. (Hear, hear!) He had thought it a duty and a pleasure to come forward and do all in his power to support the old-established pack, and he deemed himself very fortunate in having been enabled by the position he was placed in to follow, though at a great distance, in the footsteps of so fine and generous an old sportsman as the late Mr. Davenport. (Applause.) He was glad that they would have with them next year his son, Mr. Henry Davenport, than whom there was no finer sportsman or finer rider, or one who more thoroughly enjoyed a run with the North Staffordshire Hounds. (Hear, hear!) No son could help feeling pain at seeing an old-established Hunt go from the place of his own home to start on other ground, but Mr. Henry had now joined them in the most cordial manner. (Applause.) Their prospects on all sides were blooming. Having thanked the gentlemen connected with the neighbouring packs of hounds—especially the Albrighton—for their great courtesy and kindness, and expressed his belief that if at any time the appearance of difference arose, a little "give and take" would make matters pleasant, the noble earl went on to express the obligations they were under to his friend, Captain Nugent—(loud applause)—for the wonderful way he had managed to keep them in order. They had had excellent sport, and for that they were in a great measure indebted to Captain Nugent, of whose courteous behaviour and able management he could not speak too highly. (Applause.) Amid renewed applause his lordship thanked the neighbouring landowners and occupiers for the kindness and courtesy which they always showed to the Hunt, and mentioned the Duke of Sutherland, the Chairman (Mr. J. W. Philips), and Mr. Buller, as among those to whom they were especially indebted. For such kindness they could not be sufficiently thankful, for although they might have the best pack in the country, the finest horses, and the best management, a hunt would have very little success without the co-operation of the neighbouring landowners and occupiers. He must, in the name of the Hunt, express their sense of obligation for the courtesy they always received, and the great hospitality extended towards them. (Loud applause.) In conclusion, his lordship said he was glad to tell them that the hounds were well, and the horses were well, and he hoped would be better. Captain Nugent and himself would not relax their exertions to make the Hunt as good as attention and the money given them would allow. Although they were a little unfortunate in not getting all the hounds they wanted at the time of Mr. Davenport's sale, they had since obtained some excellent animals from Sir Watkin Wynne's pack, and he trusted that in due time they would be in as efficient a state as before. (Loud applause.)

Mr. B. Fitzherbert rose, amid loud cheers, to propose the health of Captain Nugent, the Master of the Hunt, who so admirably combined the qualities of unvarying cordiality and good humour with that firmness which was so necessary for the successful control of a field. (Hear, hear!) He ventured to say that Captain Nugent had given the greatest satisfaction to every member of the Hunt. (Applause.) They must all appreciate the energy with which he had organized the Hunt; his careful management, and the very good sport he had afforded them; for it was owing in a great measure to his judgment and tact that they had had as excellent sport as had been enjoyed by any pack in the country. (Hear, hear!) He congratulated Lord Shrewsbury on having secured so able a coadjutor as Captain Nugent, and heartily thanked the gallant captain for his constant attendance in the field in all weathers. (Applause.)

The toast was drunk amid loud cheering.

Captain Nugent, in responding, said it was very gratifying to him to find that they were pleased with the sport they had had this season. The elements had certainly been against them, for they had been stopped by frost twenty times out of seventy-six advertised days since November 1st. There was very little hunting in February, usually the best month in the year, and latterly they had had very dry weather. Indeed, the scent had been very uncertain all through the season, but, notwithstanding this, they had had many good gallops, for which they were indebted to the number of foxes found. There had not been a single blank day, and they had almost always found their second or third fox when wanted. (Hear, hear!) The more foxes there were the better the sport would be. He had heard of people saying that they might have too many foxes, but he thought they might as well complain of having too much money. (Hear, hear! and laughter.) Foxes were well preserved all over the country—(hear, hear!)—and abounded in the extensive covers belonging to Mr. Fitzherbert, Mr. Davenport, and Mr. Meynell Ingram, the Draycot woods and other covers, which he need not mention. They had a capital pack of hounds, which was owing, in the first place, to the care bestowed upon them by that excellent sportsman, the late Mr. Davenport, who formed the North Staffordshire Hounds, and kept them for so many years at his own expense; and secondly, to the spirited manner in which Lord Shrewsbury came forward with a munificent donation towards the purchase of those hounds. (Applause.) He hoped they might have as good a field the next time they met at the covert side as they had there that day. (Loud applause.)

Captain Buchanan proposed "The owners of covers and the subscribers to the North Staffordshire Hunt." He considered that the Hunt ought to be very grateful for the support they received from all landed proprietors who were owners of covers; he thought it a most extraordinary fact, which said volumes for the sport and *bonhommie* of the Hunt, that not only did landed proprietors like them to hunt over their grounds, but were exceedingly annoyed if they did not find a fox. As long as such a state of things continued they need not fear that the North Staffordshire Hunt would fail. (Hear, hear!) He coupled with the toast the name of Mr. Basil Fitzherbert, as one of the largest cover holders and subscribers. (Loud applause.) The late Joe Maiden, he might observe, used to speak of Swynnerton as his Paradise. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. Fitzherbert, in responding, said nothing gave him greater pleasure than to see the foxhounds in any cover of his, and he hoped it would be long before they had a blank day when they came to Swynnerton. (Applause.)

The Earl of Shrewsbury proposed "The Tenant Farmers," to whose hearty support he, in a great measure, attributed the success of fhe North Staffordshire Hounds. He coupled with the toast the name of Mr. Kendrick, who always rendered them such valuable assistance. (Applause.)

Mr. Kendrick responded, thanking his brother tenant farmers for their help in finding sport for the hounds.

Other toasts followed, and a most enjoyable evening was spent.

Brief as was Lord Shrewsbury's tenure of office as Master, we ought not to close the record without a word of grateful acknowledgment for the signal service he rendered to the Hunt and to the fox-hunting fraternity of North Staffordshire. The resignation and subsequent death of Mr. Davenport in 1869 had found the country unprepared with a successor, and but for the generous and hearty manner in which Lord Shrewsbury threw himself into the breach, and brought all the influence of his personality and commanding position to bear in favour of carrying on the Hunt with undiminished vigour and prestige, matters might very easily have gone badly with the North Stafford Hunt. As it was, the late Lord Shrewsbury, in his large-hearted way, came to the front, and at once and for ever saved the position; and during the time that he remained at the head of affairs—and, indeed, for the rest of his too-short life—gave the Hunt and the committee the benefit of his kindly and generous help in every possible way. No one who remembers Lord Shrewsbury can forget his kindness, and his breezy, cordial manner, which was the outcome of a warm heart. No one was more anxious to promote good fellowship and good feeling amongst his neighbours of every degree, no one had a greater love for his own county, and no one showed a more earnest desire to make his neighbours happy. We have no doubt that his exertions on behalf of the North Stafford Hunt were undertaken mainly because he was persuaded that fox-hunting and a popular pack of hounds make for good fellowship, and tend to

THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY, M.F.H.

*From a photo by Ernest Alden, London.*

heal personal and political sores better than many remedies which may at first sight seem more promising.

Although the late Earl of Shrewsbury was not by any means excessively devoted to sport on his own account, he was undoubtedly fond of fox-hunting, as was shown by his having for years a hunting-box in Leicestershire, and before that in Cheshire, but we are certain that there was no selfish motive at the root of his action in this matter. In a word, one of his chief characteristics was to see his friends made happy, and to lend a hand in making them so, and right well he succeeded in his object.

His early and sadly sudden death, in May, 1877, was felt by all who knew him to be an almost irreparable loss, and by none more keenly than those members of the North Stafford Hunt who were brought under the influence of his bright and genial personality.

There is an unfortunate hiatus in the North Staffordshire hunting records after the death of Mr. Davenport, in 1869, until the advent of Stephen Dickins in the season of 1871–72. The huntsmen in the interval were, first Clarke, then Jennings, but each of them only stayed one season. Sport was not above the average, and no diaries appear to have been left behind them, if any were kept; neither can we find, after diligent inquiry, that any remarkable runs were recorded in the local papers during the period above referred to. But with the arrival of Dickins in 1871, in the prime of his manhood and vigour, and with the prestige of the Atherstone pack to help him, a new and brilliant impetus was given to the Hunt, and what may be called "a golden age" set in for the North Stafford. Henceforward for many years we shall have to quote largely from Stephen Dickins's diaries, supplementing his extremely concise accounts from other sources whenever they are forthcoming.

The first regular hunting day of 1871–72 is thus recorded by Dickins:

"*October* 30*th*, 1871. *Blackbrook.*—Found our first fox at Willoughbridge. Ran a ring and lost him. Found again in Forty Acres. Ran him to Ashley Planting into Burnt Wood, through it up to Cheswardine, to the left into Bishop's Wood. Ran him there till dark, and whipped off."

This was Dickins's first regular hunting day with the North Stafford, and is therefore given here, though the sport does not appear to have been above the average.

> "*November* 13*th*. *Stoke-by-Stone*.—Had a capital day. Found a fox at Shallowford Gorse, and ran him to Willoughbridge to ground. Fourteen miles from point to point.
>
> "*January* 12*th*. *Wrinehill Mill*.—Found our first fox in Checkley Wood. Ran him a ring and lost him. The first twenty minutes very fast. Found again at Woore. Ran him to Adderley without a check—time forty minutes—from Adderley to Shavington Park to the left; a ring back to Betton Moss and Mr. Corbet's Gorse back to Adderley, and whipped off at dusk at Shaw's Rough. A capital day.
>
> "*January* 31*st*. *Doddington*.—Had a capital day. Ran one hour and forty minutes and killed. A lot of Cheshire men out.
>
> "*March* 30*th*. *Whitmore Station*.—Found a fox at Whitmore Wood. Ran him thirty-five minutes and killed him in the open. Found again in Maer Hills. Ran him to Broughton Park and killed him. Forty-five minutes without a check. A very good day. The last day of the season."

The record for the season 1871–72 was: Number of days hunting seventy-three; twenty-seven foxes killed, and eighteen run to ground.

One of the early entries for 1872–73 is rather quaint, and reads as follows:—

> "*November* 13*th*, 1872. *Hilderstone Hall*.—Found at Draycot Woods and had a hard day. Lost the hounds at night and came home without them. The Captain found them and shut them up at Stone. A regular mess.
>
> "*December* 11*th*. *Stoke-by-Stone*.—Found in Orange Hayes. Ran two rings and lost him at Hardiwick Heath. Found again in one of the Sandon coverts. Ran him through the Sandon Coverts, over the park, and away as if to Orange Hayes; within two fields turned to the left, over the railway, canal, and river, up over Yarlet Hill as if for Seighford, turned to the left up to Stafford town, bore to the left past the Asylum, and killed him in the meadows near Ingestre. Time two hours and ten minutes. A very good run.
>
> "*March* 24*th*, 1873. *Swynnerton Old Park*.—Found as soon as we put the hounds into covert (I think the finest covert in England), and ran him to Trentham. We had a brace of foxes in the gorse, but could do no good with them. Found a second fox in Hatton Bogs, and ran him by Standon village up to Bromley Coppice, through it on to Ashley Planting, and killed him. Time one hour and thirty minutes."

Dickins's enthusiasm about Swynnerton Old Park will be noticed in the above record. This extensive covert has always been a fine schoolroom for young hounds, and a grand nursery for foxes, and has more than once saved the North Stafford from a blank day.

"*April 2nd*, 1873. *Woore.*—Found in the Canridden, and ran him to Checkley Wood, through it and on very near to Wybunbury Bog, and lost him through running a road the first forty minutes without a check. Found a second in Chapel Wood at Doddington. Ran him very fast two rings; to ground in the main earth. A very good day. I was presented with forty pounds."

The writer was out that day, and his own diary contains this entry—

"Fine day and warm. Went by train to Pipe Gate (for Woore), 9.23, with Colonel F. Buller. Good day. Thirty minutes from Woore in morning, and forty-five minutes from Chapel Wood in afternoon. Rode to Whitmore; drove from there. Home at 8.30. Mare not home till 11.30."

The presentation to Dickins apparently made him think all the better of the day's sport. So far as the writer recollects the circumstances, it was felt that some solid recognition should be made of the sport shown by Dickins at the end of his second season, and so a combined effort was made to give him something worthy of acceptance instead of trusting to casual "tips" from members of the Hunt. It is satisfactory to know that he appreciated the gift. Dickins closes the last entry of the season on April 4th with these words: "A very good season indeed: killed forty foxes, ran to ground twenty-five." The hounds were out altogether for hunting seventy-six days.

The season 1873–74 provided some fair sport, but on the whole was not so good as the preceding.

"*November 5th*, 1873. *Dilhorn Hall.*—Found a cub and killed in covert. Got away with a second. Ran him into the village and killed him. Found again, an old fox. Ran him to Kingsley Woods, over the Churnet river, railway, and canal, on to Consall Woods; from there to Ipstones; to ground in the rocks. A good day's sport. Time one hour and twenty minutes."

The present writer's diary entry is—

"First day's hunting. Killed two foxes at Dilhorn. Ran a third from Whympenny Wood *viâ* Bank Top, Above Park, Waggon and Horses, Kingsley Banks, Petty Fields, Belmont, Chapel Wood, and White Hough to ground. An hour and twenty minutes. Had a fall through wire, but well carried. Good wild sporting run."

This run was through a most difficult and unusual line of country, the latter part amongst stone walls and in the Dove Valley harrier district, where red coats and fox-hounds were scarcely ever seen. The writer well remembers the difficulties some of us had in getting safely down the steep ravine known as "Kingsley Banks," then in crossing the river and railway and canal over a rickety ironstone tramway bridge, and then the toil up a mountain on the other side. Hounds had by far the best of it; for most of us it was a case of Mr. Briggs and the Brighton harriers over again. What with getting off to lead your horse down the precipice, and getting off to ease him up the other side, one did not get quite as much horse exercise as one could have wished.

"*November* 28*th*. *Cheswardine Hall.*—Found three foxes in Chipnall Wood. Ran over to Burnt Woods; through them and into Oakley Folly and back to the Burnt Woods to ground without a check. Found a second in Oakley Folly. Ran him to Forty Acres and back and killed him. The best scenting day we have had.

"*December* 8*th*. *Swynnerton Old Park.*—Found on the heath. Ran him twice round the park, and went away to Butterton Hall, on as if for Clayton. Left it on the right, down to Trent Vale, over the canal, on to Penkhull village, on to Hartshill, down the meadows to Stoke-on-Trent Station. Got headed and run by a dog. Ran him back to Penkhull Nursery Gardens and lost him. Time one hour and five minutes."

This record is given here as a curiosity. It is probably the last time a hunted fox will ever make for Stoke-upon-Trent Railway Station, or even for Hartshill Infirmary!

"*December* 24*th*, 1873. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Hose Wood. Ran three wide rings for three hours and a half. Had to stop the hounds, as the horses were all beat. The first fifty minutes without a check. The stoutest fox I ever ran."

There is no exaggeration in what Dickins says of this day and of the stoutness of the fox. There was no suspicion that we changed foxes, and we were going hard the whole time. The writer was riding an exceptionally game and stout mare, and she was so done that he had to leave near Leigh Station about half an hour before the end, and was glad to get her home all right and to find her sound and well next day.

"*December* 31*st*, 1873. *Stoke-by-Stone.*—Found in Orange Hayes. Ran to Hardiwick Heath; a ring by Hilderstone, back to Cotwalton Drumble, and killed near Milwich. Time two hours and ten minutes."

The writer has reason to remember this day, for in the run above recorded he had the misfortune to strain his favourite hunter so badly that he was not able to ride her again for the rest of the season.

> "*March 4th*, 1874. *Moddershall Mill.*—Found in Black Lake. Ran him round Stallington, and ran him to ground. Found a second at Downs Banks. Ran to Cocknage Wood, back to Moddershall Oaks, on to Hilderstone village, up to Hardwick Heath and killed him. One hour and fifty minutes. Very good run."

Record for the season: Hunted seventy-seven days, killed thirty foxes, ran twenty-nine to ground.

It will be noted that this was the last season of Colonel Nugent's Mastership, and that in May, 1874, the hounds and the Mastership were transferred to the present Duke of Sutherland (then Marquis of Stafford), with the cordial good-will of the members of the Hunt and of the landowners and farmers in the district, and with the brightest prospects of success, which we shall find have been abundantly fulfilled; but we must reserve the history of the new *régime* for a future chapter. It is only right to mention that almost from the time of Mr. Davenport's retirement to the end of Colonel Nugent's Mastership, the Rev. C. H. Mainwaring, of Whitmore, acted as honorary secretary to the Hunt with great zeal and success.

An obituary notice of Colonel Nugent, who died at Bournemouth on May 4th, 1889, appeared in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of that time, from which we have extracted the following particulars:—

> "Lieut.-Colonel Nugent belonged to a good old Irish family. He commenced his military career in Ireland, and afterwards became adjutant of the 2nd King's Own Staffordshire Militia. During a period of nearly twenty years Captain Nugent held the post of adjutant, with much credit to himself and to the entire satisfaction of his commanding officer, the late Lord Hatherton. On his retirement from the adjutancy in 1875, he was presented with a testimonial by the officers, Colonel Lord Hatherton, in making the presentation, saying that in losing the services of Captain Nugent he was losing his right hand. Captain Nugent was given a majority in the regiment, with the honorary rank of Lieut.-Colonel. He finally retired from the regiment, under the age clause, in 1880. Captain Nugent was a good sportsman, and for a number of years (as we have seen) was Master of the North Staffordshire Hounds, and in this he had had previous experience in Ireland, as Master of the Westmeath Hounds. During his eleven years of Mastership with the two packs, he was never known to be

absent from a day's cub-hunting. On the occasion of his retirement, in 1874, from the Mastership of the North Staffordshire Hounds, a handsome testimonial was subscribed for, the presentation taking place on the first meet of the season 1874–75, at the New Inn, Trentham, the testimonial consisting of a massive diamond ring, a silver breakfast service, beautifully engraved with rustic scenes, and a silver salver, bearing a suitable inscription. Colonel R. Buller made the presentation, and in laudatory terms spoke of Captain Nugent's Mastership for the past five years, remarking that the office required much firmness, patience, perseverance, tact, and good temper, in all of which qualities Captain Nugent excelled. In 1869 he was placed on the Commission of the Peace for Staffordshire, and was a regular attendant at Quarter Sessions and Stafford Petty Sessions."

Colonel Nugent was an excellent *raconteur*, and had quite a stock of old hunting anecdotes, one of which we will venture to quote. So far as we recollect, this was how Colonel Nugent used to tell the story :—

Somewhere in the West Country, a noble Master of Foxhounds was left high and dry, after a long run, some twenty miles from home, and was hospitably entertained with good beer and bread and cheese by a sporting farmer of the district, before starting for his long trot home. In the exuberance of his heart, the M.F.H. gave the farmer a general invitation to return the visit whenever he should find himself near his lordship's house. Some weeks afterwards the farmer returned the call about nine o'clock at night, and was shown into the dining-room, where the master was sitting at the table with his friends over their wine, after the ladies had left. After greetings, the guest was offered a seat near the fire. "Well, what's the news your way?" said the noble lord. "Nothing particular," was the reply, "only my old sow has just had a litter of thirteen, and she has only twelve teats." "That's very awkward," said the M.F.H.; "what becomes of the odd one?" "He sits on his beam ends, and watches the others sucking, just like I'm doing now," was Giles's ready reply. Needless to add that the port at once travelled in Farmer Giles's direction!

# CHAPTER V.

## LORD STAFFORD'S MASTERSHIP—GOOD SPORT IN THE SEVENTIES.

The season of 1874–75, Lord Stafford's first season as Master, was a good deal interrupted by frost, especially through the month of December; but some fairly good things are chronicled in Dickins's diary, from which we extract the following:—

"*November* 13*th*. *Woore*.—Found in Harrow's Wood. Ran him forty minutes, and killed him in the open—a good thing. Found a second in the Admiral's Gorse, and ran him to ground at Bellaport. Afterwards drew Checkley Wood blank.

"*November* 20*th*. *Walgherton Lodge, Doddington*.—Found in Wybunbury Bogs; had a good forty minutes, and lost him near Woore. Found a second in Chapel Wood. Ran him very fast to Walgherton, on to Batherton, and away to Hankelow Hall, to ground over the Weaver in the Cheshire country. Time one hour and ten minutes."

There were only two days in December (7th and 9th) when it was possible to hunt, and on one of these days Dickins records that the snow was so deep that they had to whip off and come home.

"*January* 13*th*, 1875. *Sandon*.—Found a brace in the wood. Ran one very fast up to Birchwood Park, on past Chartley, and back through the gorse, and lost him near Birchwood Park. Found a second in Brindley's Wood. Ran him an hour round Draycot, and lost him at Stallington. A good day.

"*January* 29*th*. *Woore*.—Found in the Canridden Wood. Ran him at a great pace to Checkley, on to Wrinehill, past Onneley village, over Barr Hill, through and on to Bromley Coppice, past Broughton Hall, on to Burnt Woods. Whipped off; horses beat. A capital day.

"*March* 10*th*. *Bird-in-Hand*.—Found in the gorse, and ran him through Hose Wood and New Close Sprink, away to Chartley Park, on to Bagot's Wood, and lost him. Found a second at Birchwood Park, ran him to Stallington Hall. A very hard day.

"*March* 31*st*, 1875. *Woodseat.*—Found a good fox. Ran him to Birchwood Park, and lost him. Did not know the country. Found a second at Draycot, a vixen."

This entry of Dickins's at first sight seems a little ambiguous, and it may be just worth while to point out that he does not mean that the fox "did not know the country," but that he (Dickins) was in unknown latitudes, the fact being that almost the whole of the run was in the Meynell country, and this particular line, though no doubt familiar enough to the fox, had probably never been traversed before by the North Staffordshire huntsman—Woodseat being quite on the outside of the North Stafford country, and some eighteen miles at least from the kennels.

The present writer's diary entry of this run, which was really a very fair gallop, although so briefly disposed of by Dickins, is as follows:—

"Found a good fox at Chipperlee Coppice, and had a good gallop *viâ* Beamhurst, North Staffordshire Railway, Philips's Gorse, near Bromshall, Carry Coppice, Gratwich, and Birchwood Park, where he beat us. Well carried by Gipsy Queen."

The following account of the Woodseat day (March 31st) appeared in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of the following week:—

"On Wednesday the lawn meet of the season *par excellence* came off at Woodseat, the residence of C. M. Campbell, Esq., M.P. A special train brought the noble Master, the Marquis of Stafford, and a good sprinkling of members of the Hunt, together with the hounds and the Hunt servants from Stoke. A large field, including the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Ingestre, Ladies Gwendoline and Muriel Talbot, and many members of the Meynell Hunt, graced the meet and partook of the generous hospitality of Mr. Campbell. A fox of the right sort was soon found at Chipperley Coppice, and the hounds, settling down in earnest, rattled him at a good pace over a fine grass country, with fair sporting fences, to Beamhurst, across the Cheadle and Uttoxeter turnpike road, over the Tean brook and the pastures beyond to the North Staffordshire Railway, which was crossed opposite Hays House, through Bramshall Gorse (the property of that excellent sportsman and staunch fox-preserver, Mr. J. W. Philips). Here an unlucky check occurred, which saved the life of the fox. He was afterwards run, sometimes at a good pace, but with frequent checks, through Carry Coppice, over the river Blythe, near Field, to Gratwich; then, leaving Chartley on the left and turning to the right to Birchwood Park, nearly to Field again, and, after a good hunting run of about an hour and a half, this gallant fox was left to fight another day, being lost somewhere near Birchwood Park. A second fox was found at

Morrilow Heath Gorse about four o'clock in the afternoon, and gave the remnant of the field a ringing gallop round Draycot Woods to Fulford, where he was given up, thus ending a most satisfactory day's sport, considering the dry state of the ground and the bad scent which has prevailed of late. Every one was glad to see the noble Master in the saddle, and riding forward all through the first run. The spirited manner in which he has carried on the Hunt through this, his first season of Mastership, deserves a word of acknowledgment. Great credit is due to Stephen Dickins, the huntsman, for the persevering way in which he handles his pack and shows sport, always riding admirably to hounds. May he long continue to hold the horn, and may I be there to see many such good things another season.

"TALLY-HO."

Record for the season 1874–75: Killed thirty-six foxes; ran to ground thirty-seven. Hunted altogether seventy-six days.

The first notable entry in Dickins's diary for 1875–76 is the following:—

"*November 29th*, 1875. *Johnson Hall.*—Drew Wincote Wood blank. Found in Sugnall Wood. Ran him past Charnes and Fair Oak, through the Bishop's Woods, up to Cheswardine Hall, into Chipnall Wood, and killed him two fields from the Wood. A very good run. Time one hour and five minutes.

"*February 2nd*, 1876. *Croxden Abbey.*—Found a fox in Chipperlee Wood. Ran him fast to Alton Towers, to ground in the rocks. Found a brace in Lord's Coppice. Chopped one; ran the other over the river Churnet, and stopped the hounds at Oakamoor, and came home by myself. Lost all the field and whips. A very rough country, all stone walls."

The writer's diary entry of this day's sport is—

"Croxden. Good gallop from Chipperlee to Alton Towers, and to ground. Chopped a fox at New Plantation, and had woodland run *viâ* Heath House, Freehay, Threapwood, New Hay, Gibridding, etc. Hounds lost; only Dickins with them."

There certainly was some excuse for the field being thrown out in this wholesale manner, for the latter part of the run was through and along the steep ravine called the Churnet Valley, and along the wooded sides of the steepest hills, probably, in North Staffordshire, and when by any chance you found yourself in the open, it was, to use Dickins's words, "a very rough country, all stone walls." The writer remembers the day well, and the general surprise on our part that Dickins somehow managed to keep with the hounds and to keep them all together, with not a soul to help him.

An amusing incident occurred on January 22nd, 1876. There was a good deal of frost and some snow on the ground, and the fixture being at Moddershall, a rather hilly and bleak district, the Master did not decide to go to the meet until an hour after the advertised time. In crossing the Big Ley at Trentham, near the present golf-links, a fox suddenly jumped up in front of hounds, when the pack broke away, and hunted their fox on towards Swynnerton and Beech Cliffe, where they killed him. On returning to the kennels, some few members of the Hunt were found, who had gone as a forlorn hope to Moddershall, scarcely expecting to see hounds on such a hard morning. No one saw the fun except the Master and the Hunt servants; the only sportsman who was with them was on a horse fresh and short of work, and was "bucked" off as soon as hounds started to run. In spite of the sharp gallop and kill, all the sportsmen agreed that it was not fit to go on hunting, so nothing more was done.

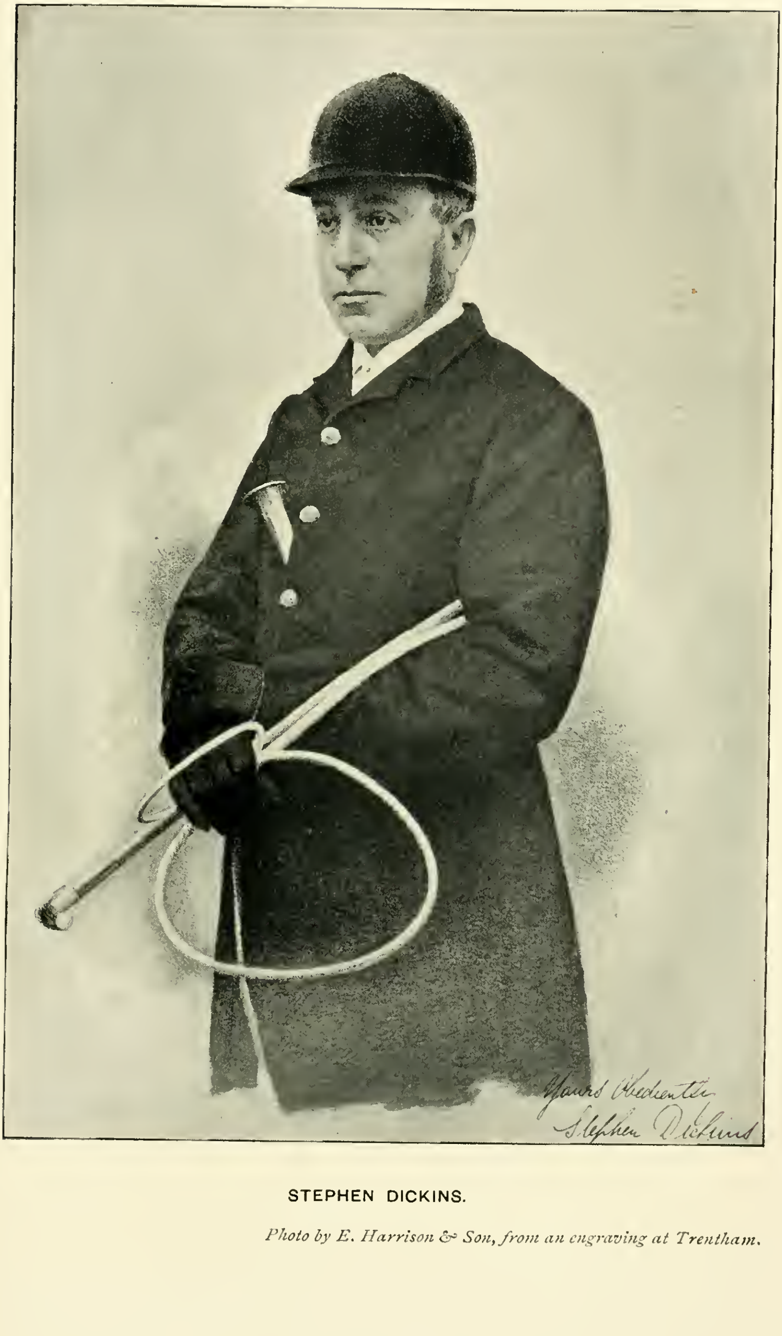
"*February* 18*th*, 1876. *Adderley.*—Found in the dry pool, and killed him in the covert. Found a second in Dog-kennel Wood. Ran him fifteen minutes, and killed. Found a third in the Belt, ran him out for Shavington into a stable; brought him out, gave him a start, and ran into him in half a mile. Found a fourth at Buerton Gorse. Ran him fast to the Canridden, through that and Harrow's Wood and very nearly to Doddington, back to the right up to Mill Hay and through, and killed him one field from the covert. A good day."

This was a red-letter day for Dickins—four foxes killed, and a good gallop with the last—a day after his own heart. His sympathy with hounds was so keen that the best of gallops never quite satisfied him without a kill. Those who knew Dickins well can easily fancy how he would enjoy a day like this, and how jovially he would jog home to Trentham after the day's work.

"*March* 8*th*, 1876. *Caverswall Village.*—Found in Caverswall Common, and ran him to Dilhorn and Kingsley Woods, past Froghall and Ipstones, on to Windy Arbour, and lost him in a storm at Cauldon Lowe Stone quarries. A good run."

The writer's diary entry of this run is as follows:—

"Found clinking fox at Caverswall Common, and ran him for nearly three hours to Cauldon Lowe *viâ* Shawe Woods and Kingsley Banks. Well carried


Yours Obediently
Stephen Dickins

STEPHEN DICKINS.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, from an engraving at Trentham.*

by Black Bess. Drenching rain and high wind came on, and saved a sporting fox's life. Hounds came home through Cheadle."

This was one of the wild moorland runs we occasionally get from the Dilhorn side of the country. Again we crossed the precipitous Churnet Valley, and the last part of the run was entirely in the bleak stone-wall country usually hunted by the Dove Valley Harriers only. We looked like killing our fox to a dead certainty, until a violent storm came on and annihilated every atom of scent.

"*April 5th*, 1876. *Dilhorn.*—Found in Foxfield Wood. Ran him a ring or two away to Kingsley, and killed him at Froghall. One hour and forty minutes. The last day of the season."

The writer has reason to remember this day, for he got a nasty fall over timber, which might have had serious consequences but for kindly and generous help from brother sportsmen close at hand. The gate, the mare, and the rider were all on the ground together, and all mixed, the mare, thoroughly alarmed, struggling and kicking with all her might. If a certain gallant friend * (now, alas ! no longer with us) had not come to the rescue with much readiness and presence of mind, the writer might very easily have been seriously, if not fatally, injured ; and yet the mare was one of the best timber jumpers possible. The writer took the hint, and for the future did not select high timber for choice.

The Dilhorn run of April 5th was thus recorded in the *Field* of the following week :

"The last meet of the season was at Dilhorn Hall, the seat of Sir E. Buller, when, after partaking of an excellent luncheon, we drew the adjacent coverts, and found Reynard at Fox Fields. He gave us an excellent run of one hour and forty minutes, and, after crossing the Churnet and the North Stafford Rail, he was killed at Froghall. There can be no doubt he was the same fox we ran from the same covert three weeks back, as he took us much the same line, but was too hardly pressed to reach his point, the huntsman remarking, before breaking him up, that his legs were so rigid he could not even bend them.

"My intention in writing is not so much to offer an account of the run, as a short review of the past season, having frequently wished to give you an account of our doings; but one good day has followed another in such rapid succession that I was always puzzled which to report upon, and I unhesitatingly say it has been the best season ever known in this district. The kill has been six brace more than in any season on record, so that if the principle holds good that the more you kill the more you have, our prospects for next season are glorious, whilst the reputation of the hunt has drawn sportsmen from all quarters; and any one who has made a point of attending the Friday's meet, must have been struck, not only with the large and influential fields, but with the excellent runs we have invariably had on those days. There has been no lack of foxes, and (what is much to say) we have not had a blank day during the season. We all regret losing our excellent secretary, Mr. W. F. Brockholes, who has left the neighbourhood, and taken with him the good wishes of every man of the Hunt, as he possesses that rare qualification of making every one his friend without making a single enemy. The members of the Hunt are not only indebted to those gentlemen who preserve foxes and whose land we ride over, but to the noble family of Trentham for the spirited and excellent manner in which the country has been hunted four days a week. I am sure all will bear testimony, and join with me in wishing that the North Staffordshire Hunt will always retain a Lord Stafford for its Master.

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* Colonel F. C. Manningham Buller, of the Coldstreams.

"J. C."

"J. C." was only echoing the general sentiment of regret on Mr. Fitzherbert Brockholes giving up the secretaryship, but he took it up again on the resignation of Mr. Edward Heathcote, in about nine years after this. Both were most admirable and efficient hon. secretaries. The record for the season was seventy foxes killed, forty run to ground. Hunting altogether one hundred days.

The season of 1876–77 was not by any means a good one for sport. On several days Dickins records that there was no scent, and there were two bad cases of accident to the pack; in one case three valuable hounds being badly lamed from falling into a stone quarry—a drop of forty feet—and on another day (at Whitmore) two of the best bitches, Relish and Melody, were run over and killed by a passing train on the London and North Western Railway. Dickins adds—

> "The rest of the hounds went on and killed their fox in Wrinehill Wood. As good a thirty minutes as could be, if it had not been for the accident."

One of the best days of this rather unlucky season was from Seighford on November 27th, 1876, and is thus briefly recorded in the huntsman's diary:

> "Found in the Moors Covert. Ran him three rings and killed. Found a second in the Brickhill pit. Ran him by William's Wood back to the Hall, and after a good ring or two killed him. Drew Shallowford Gorse blank, but found a good fox in the Black Plantation, near to Walton, and ran him at a great pace for thirty minutes to ground at Cresswell. A good day, the best scent since cub-hunting.
>
> "*March* 21*st*, 1877. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Draycot Woods, but could do no good with him. Found a second in Sherratt's Wood. Ran him as if for Chartley, turned to the right and ran to ground near Hixon. Found a third fox on Stallington Heath. Ran him for two hours, and lost him near Draycot Woods."

The record for this season was forty-nine foxes killed, forty-two run to ground, and one hundred and eleven days' hunting altogether. The autumn of 1876 was memorable in the North Stafford Hunt, on account of the marriage of Lady Florence Leveson-Gower with Mr. Henry Chaplin. Her marriage, involving removal to Lincolnshire, was a serious loss to the brightness and charm of our hunting-field; but we often had the pleasure of Lady Florence Chaplin's presence with us after her marriage when visiting at Trentham, and it was a sad shock to us all when the melancholy news came in November, 1881, that her short and happy life had suddenly ended.

The season of 1877–78, especially the first part of it, was much better than the preceding, and Dickins entered on December 31st, 1877: "The best November and December ever known in Stafford. Foxes killed up to this date, nineteen and a half brace."

The first day's sport above the average appears to have been from Woore on November 16th, of which Dickins records—

> "Found in the Canridden. Ran a ring, and killed in the Mill Hay. Found a second in Harrow's Wood. Ran to the Canridden to ground. Found a third in Captain Heathcote's new gorse. Ran through Checkley Wood and Wrinehill to Aston Cliff and Willoughbridge, and killed near Pipe Gate. A good hour and thirty minutes.
>
> "*November* 17*th*, 1877. *Adderley Station.*—Found three foxes in the gorse. Ran one to Mr. Baker's small gorse to ground. Went back to the gorse, and ran a second to ground. Got on to a third, and ran a ring to ground at Buerton Farm. Found another in Buerton Gorse, and he went to ground. Found a good fox in Braddon's Drumble. Ran to Nantwich and killed. A capital hour and twenty minutes."

Four foxes in a day to ground and one kill is rather an exceptional record, and therefore we produce this day's account, which otherwise does not strike one as remarkably good in the way of sport. Whether there was something defective on the part of the earth-stopper, or whether these four foxes were of the half-hearted sort that will go into any drain or rabbit-hole rather than show sport above ground, does not appear from the huntsman's concise diary.

"*November* 30*th*, 1877. *Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Wood. Ran by Shaw's Rough to Weston Hall, and thence over the brook to Barthomley and Foxley, and to the right to Mill Dale. There they got up to him and raced him back by Barthomley to Crewe Wood, and then round the Mere, and killed him under the terrace at Crewe Hall."

This must have been a meritorious gallop, and over an unusual line, the latter part of the run in the Cheshire country. The distance from point to point and the time are not mentioned in Dickins's entry, so that one can only guess at the merits of this run. Dickins was essentially a man of few words, and we find that he often describes a capital day in the shortest possible compass.

"*December* 17*th*, 1877. *Weston Hall, Crewe.*—Drew Basford Wood blank. Went on to Wybunbury Bog. Found a good fox. Went away at a great pace by Lea Park, leaving Doddington on the right, as if for Checkley Wood; left that on his right, past Wrinehill to Heighley Castle, near Madeley, where he was run into. Twenty-five minutes without the least check. Finished the day at Madeley, where we found another fox.

"*January* 5*th*, 1878. *Seighford.*—Found in one of the Seighford Coverts. Ran to the Moors and away to Eccleshall, and lost. Found a second in Wincote Wood. Ran at a great pace up to Bishop's Wood, through it and Burnt Wood, Wrinehill, and Madeley Manor. Distance twenty-six miles. Stopped hounds."

This seems to have been a heavy day for hounds and horses, and apparently there was scarcely a trot left in any of the horses when hounds were whipped off.

"*February* 8*th*, 1878. *Woore.*—Found in the Admiral's Gorse. Ran to Finson's Hay; a ring back to the gorse, away to Buerton and Golling's Rough, on to Betton; a ring back to Golling's Rough, and killed him. Time one hour and forty minutes.

"*March* 15*th*, 1878. *Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Wood. Ran as straight as possible right away to Golling's Rough, and on to Betton Moss; then a ring back round the Highfield Gorse to Buerton and Bellaporte back to Golling's Rough, and killed in the road between Norton-in-Hales and Adderley. Time one hour and fifty minutes."

The record for the season was forty-nine foxes killed, and forty-two run to ground, which, by a curious coincidence, was exactly similar to the record of the previous season, but it was accomplished in ninety-nine days' hunting as compared with one hundred and eleven days in the season of 1876–77. It is evident that scent was much better in the season of 1877–78, and that sport generally was of a higher class than in the preceding season, although the "bag" was precisely the same.

The season of 1878–79 was much interrupted by a long frost, which set in about the latter end of November, and almost entirely stopped hunting until February, 1879.

Dickins mentions, *à propos* of January 1st, 1879, when hounds managed to get out in a short interval of open weather, that Boxall hunted the hounds—that he (Dickins) could not go out, being unwell, and that this was the first time hounds had been out without him in twenty-two years.

"*March* 10*th*, 1879. *Betley Hall.*—Drew Betley blank and Wrinehill; also Finson's Hay. Found at Harrow's Wood. Ran to Checkley and on to Blakenhall, and back to Checkley and Finson's Hay Gorse, and killed him. A good hour and forty minutes.

"*March* 31*st*, 1879. *Weston Hall, Crewe.*—Found at Doddlespool. Ran a ring to Mill Dale and Barthomley, back to Mill Dale to ground. Then got on another fox and killed him. Found a third at Craddock Moss. Ran to Hayes Wood to ground. Found a fourth fox at the Gladdings, and killed him."

This very moderate season came to an end with a poor day's sport from Stableford Bridge on April 12th. The record of foxes killed was forty-two, and thirty run to ground. Not such a bad record, seeing that the hounds were only out on seventy-eight days altogether, being stopped by frost and snow for something like seven weeks.

The season of 1879–80 was again unlucky in the matter of frost and snow. Dickins records that altogether hounds were stopped by frost for twenty-eight hunting days during the season.

"*November* 10*th*, 1879. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in the Canal Covert at Betton. Ran fast to Oakley Folly to ground. Then went back to Betton.

Found in the Osiers. Ran to Tunstall, on to the Market Drayton road, over the Hills Farm, up to Chipnall Wood, through on to the Bishop's Woods; ran till dusk, and stopped hounds at dark. A good day, but a hard day.

"*November* 19*th,* 1879. *Woore.*—Found in the Drumble near Three Brooks. Ran fast for thirty minutes, and killed at Golling's Rough. Found a second at Buerton Gorse. Ran to High Field, past the gorse, to ground near Hankelow, at a place called Brown Orchard.

"*February* 25*th*, 1880. *Woore.*—Found in Mill Hay. Ran fast to Checkley and Wrinehill, a ring, and away to Betley, and killed. One hour and ten minutes. Found a second in Finson's Hay Gorse. Ran to Doddington, and killed. Fifty minutes."

The present writer was out, and has noted this in his diary as follows :—

"Good day's sport. Found at Mill Hay Wood, and killed at Betley, after an hour and a quarter very fast. Found a second fox in Heathcote's Gorse, and fast gallop towards Betton Moss and Doddington. Left after Checkley Wood to catch train at Pipe Gate."

This entry reminds us of one of the drawbacks from which the present writer suffered when hunting on the Woore side. It was always an even chance that one had to sacrifice the afternoon run in order to catch the only available return train, which left about four o'clock, the distance being too great to allow of any other conveyance; but the attractions of the Woore country generally prevailed over this slight drawback, and no meets of the North Staffordshire Hunt were, or are, better attended than those in the Woore district. Of course, to many of the regular followers it is well within riding distance; but those who live on the Draycot and Dilhorn side, like the present writer, can only hunt at Woore by using the North Staffordshire Railway as their covert hack.

The hounds had a good straight gallop and a kill from Downs Banks on Friday, March 5th, 1880, of which, fortunately, we have the following cheery account from the pen of "One who likes a Good Run," which appeared in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of the following week :—

### A GOOD RUN WITH THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE.

Perhaps the country hunted over by the North Staffordshire Hounds possesses riders rather than writers, for it is but seldom, although good hunting and riding are to be found here, that any accounts of them appear in our county paper. This has tempted a North Staffordshire fox-hunter to send an account of a good day last week. The meet on Friday was at Barlaston, where the truth of the proverb "variety is charming" had ample opportunity of being proved, for every variety of mount was visible. Boys on half-broken colts, enjoying themselves as thoroughly as the gentlemen whose appearance filled one with wonder as to how long it had taken to attain such a height of perfection; ladies on their pretty dancing steeds, children on ponies, etc. After partaking of the hospitality of Mr. James Meakin, the field, under the guidance of the Marquis of Stafford, awaited the appearance of that animal on whose head hung the hopes and expectations of all present; but, alas! Reynard, doubtlessly alarmed by the numerous foot-passengers (whose zeal occasionally outstrips their prudence), was not "at home," and we trotted on to Cocknage, which also proved "no go." The word of command was then given for Moddershall, and when this also was drawn blank, looks of anxiety and despondency were seen on most faces, till the magic words "Downs Banks" began to be whispered, and on arriving there, girths were tightened, luncheon hastily despatched, etc., when lo! first a whimper, then a cry, then a wild holloa, proclaims to the anxious field that the desire of their hearts has broken cover. Now for a scramble up the hill. But what's that? "Tally-ho back;" and back we creep, finding on reaching the gorse again that Reynard is once more on foot. Away we go, every nerve quivering with excitement, down to Kibblestone, with scarcely a look at the gorse, over the fields to Moddershall, which our leader, being hard pressed, dashes boldly through, and makes for Spot Gorse. Here a slight check occurs, just enough to breathe our panting horses, before off we are again. Stallington is passed at a rattler, and down we go with scarcely a check to Cresswell or Leigh (in the hurry little notice is taken of the station), over the railway, and pointing bravely towards Cheadle, our gallant fox tears on, but from inquiries we learn that he is pretty well spent. "How long ago?" "A good time." Then "ten minutes," then "five," till at last when the spires of Cheadle become distinctly seen from the hill on which we stand "Tally-ho" resounds, and our brave but ill-fated conductor struggles forth from the covert, is immediately pulled down by the foremost hound, and we know our good run of about two hours is over. The master presents the brush to Miss Hollins, who has ridden extremely well throughout; and then inquiries are made for missing friends, and we jog home discussing the day's sport with all the ardour of fox-hunters.

One who likes a Good Run.

Dickins's diary account of this run was as follows: "Barlaston Hall. Found at Downs Banks. Ran fast to Stallington, on down to Creswell by Draycot village, and killed him at Cheadle. One hour and ten minutes."

The writer was out, and entered the run in his own diary as a good gallop with a very good straight fox, and over rather an unusual line of country, as the foxes from that side seldom cross the Crewe and Derby line of railway. The kill was at Litley Farm, about a mile from Cheadle, on the Draycot side, and to the writer the run had the special and unusual attraction of landing him at the appropriate finish within a mile of his own house.

The record for 1879–80 was fifty-five foxes killed, and twenty-four run to ground. Sixty-five hunting days only, owing to frost.

The season of 1880–81 began well, with good sport and good hunting weather in November and the early part of December, but after the second week in that month a long frost set in, which practically stopped hunting for about six weeks.

> "*November* 10*th*, 1880. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in the osier bed at Betton. Ran to Tunstall, from there to Old Spring to the Spoil Bank, on to Cheswardine Gorse up to the Hall, from there to the Park Springs at Hales, and killed him. Found a second in the osiers at Oakley Hall. Ran to Blackbrook and back to Oakley, and killed him. A good day.
>
> "*December* 1*st*, 1880. *Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Wood. Ran to Walgherton Pool down to the river Weaver, over and on at a great pace up to near Combermere, and back to the Hall-a-Coole Gorse; then to Broomhall a ring, and killed him at Beddington. A capital day.
>
> "*February* 23*rd*, 1881. *Woore.*—Found in Harrow's Wood. Ran a ring to Checkley and Wrinehill, to ground by the railway. Went back to Woore; got on a fox at Canridden. Ran to the Drumble and back, then to Bellaport, and lost him. The Empress out.
>
> "*March* 16*th*, 1881. *Doddington.*—Drew all the Doddington coverts blank, but found a good fox in Harrow's Wood. Ran to Betton, back by Adderley to Golling's Rough and Buerton and Three Brooks, and back to Bellaport. Had to stop hounds, horses quite beat. A good day."

The writer was out, and this is his diary entry of the day:

> "Splendid sunny day; cool east wind. Hunting at Doddington. Found at 1.40 at Harrow's Wood, Woore. Fast gallop by Buerton Gorse and Betton, and back towards Woore. Gipsy Queen done to a turn, and C. J. B. out of the latter part. H.I.M. the Empress out, and a great field, Lady Florence Chaplin, etc."

> "*April* 4*th*, 1881. *Croxden Abbey.*—Found in Cavendish's Wood, Nothill. Ran up to Heath House and lost. Found a second in Winnoth Dale. Ran an hour and ten minutes, and killed him at Alton Towers."

The present writer was out, and has a very similar entry as to the day's sport, which was rather above the average, only that he gives the scene of the kill as "close to High Shutt," a farm about halfway between Cheadle and Oakamoor, some two miles from Alton Towers itself, but near the Threapwood coverts, belonging to the Alton estate. It was a fair gallop considering the country, and that a cold east wind was blowing all day.

The record for 1880–81 is forty-one foxes killed, twenty-two run to ground. Hunting only seventy days.

Our readers will notice that her Majesty the late Empress of Austria hunted with the North Staffordshire Hounds this season. She was also with us either the season of 1879–80 or the season of 1878–79, the writer is not sure which. She made Combermere Abbey her headquarters, and enjoyed some good gallops both with the Cheshire and the North Staffordshire Hounds. On the first occasion she was piloted by Captain ("Bay") Middleton—now, alas! no more. For the season of 1880–81, she was very successfully piloted by Colonel Rivers Bulkeley, who, besides being a fine horseman and good rider to hounds, has a thorough knowledge of the Cheshire and North Staffordshire country.

Colonel Bulkeley unfortunately does not keep a journal, but he kindly informs the writer that he remembers "one good gallop from Buerton Gorse to Betton Moss, eighteen minutes, that her Majesty said was one of the fastest gallops she had during her stay at Combermere. Her Majesty rode Hard Times, her best horse."

None of the North Staffordshire field who hunted in those days will easily forget the graceful, slender figure of her Imperial Majesty on horseback, her perfect seat, her remarkably youthful appearance, and her fearless riding. We all remember, too, her habit of carrying a black fan, which she either held in her hand or kept strapped to her saddle, and used it as a protection against people who stared at her Majesty, and particularly against artists and photographers, who were often an annoyance to her. No one probably gave her Majesty credit for much knowledge of hounds and hunting, but, with a pilot to make up for her want of knowledge of the country, there were few of either sex who could surpass her in a quick thing with hounds, and her keen enjoyment of a fast gallop was very noticeable. Little did any of us think, as we followed the Empress sailing triumphantly over the Woore country, what a sad and tragic fate was in store for her. The double tragedy of the mysterious death of the Crown Prince, her only son, and then her own deplorable murder some three years ago at Geneva, were mercifully hidden from every one. And now all that remains to us is to add our tribute of respectful sympathy over the sad grave of one so lovely, so accomplished, and so unfortunate.

The Warwickshire Hunt poet-laureate, in the second volume of the "Annals of the Warwickshire Hunt," has contributed some stirring verses, in which the Empress's visit to the Warwickshire country is thus happily described:

"The bright star of Europe her kingdom has left,
And Austria mourns of its Empress bereft.
Firm seat in the saddle, light hand on the reins,
As e'er guided steed over Hungary's plains,
She has come, with her beauty, grace, courage, and skill,
To ride with our hounds from old Shuckburgh hill."

## CHAPTER VI.

### DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRY—WIRE QUESTION—ANECDOTES OF DICKINS.

Any one judging of the North Staffordshire country from a glance at the map, without much local knowledge, would be likely enough to set it down as a six-days-a-week country. If you glance at the Ordnance map from Doddington or Adderley or Woore on the west, to Alton Towers and Croxden Abbey on the east, and again from Alsager, and Mow Cop on the north, to Seighford and Cresswell Hall on the south, you appear to have an enormous area to hunt over, but a practical acquaintance with the district and its hunting capabilities will soon remove this too favourable impression. To begin with, nearly one-third of the area is a stone wall, moorland country without coverts and without foxes, and so steep and rugged as to be impracticable for fox-hunting purposes altogether. This applies to a large stretch of country in the north, ranging from Knypersley and Biddulph to Alstonefield, and embracing towns like Leek and Longnor, with numerous scattered villages such as Cauldon, Grindon, Alstonefield, and others. Then right in the centre of the hunt is wedged the enormous population of the potteries, about a quarter of a million, with no less than six towns in a continuous line from Tunstall in the north-west, to Longton in the south-east, thus forming an insuperable obstacle to hunting for many miles. Then on the outskirts of the pottery towns, extensive collieries and iron-works exist, still further encroaching on the domain of sport. The North Staffordshire country is bounded on the west by the Cheshire and the Shropshire Hunts, and by the Meynell and the Albrighton on the east and south-east. "Brooksby," in his "Hunting Countries of Great Britain" (p. 255), very accurately describes the general features of the western portion of the North Stafford country from a fox-hunter's point of view in these words :

> "The western edge, from Crewe down to Market Drayton, and as far inwards, say, as Woore, is entirely what we are accustomed to look upon as Cheshire type, viz. dairy farms, small inclosures, level ground, deep soil, and fair hedge and ditch fences (sometimes with the hedge set on a low bank). Without there being any distinction, there is this little difference—in the fences as you ride into North Staffordshire—high farming seems to grow out of fashion, hedges are less neatly kept, and ditches are more seldom cleaned out. But if the hedges are ragged and the ditches are blind, they present no essential change, and the same horse that carries you with the Cheshire or Sir Watkin, should do equally well with the North Staffordshire, though both he and his rider may be called upon to exercise discretion and discernment in an even fuller degree with the last named. Most of this district, indeed, belongs to the counties of Chester and Salop, and the same fine scenting grass, the same constant jumping in and out, the same deep soil, the same bursting gallops, and the same large fields of competing horsemen, may be expected to prevail with the North Staffordshire as with the other two packs. A quick, active horse that will take his fences steadily, and that does not easily tire, summarizes briefly what has already been noted at length as a desirable mount for such country. Water is not so frequently offering itself here as over the border, though it is certainly necessary that a horse should be ready to face it. Timber he will not often be called upon to surmount, for the double reason that it is not by any means lavishly used, and that when met with it is easily, and, it may almost be said, usually, avoided in favour of a fence of less obdurate nature. For it must be remembered that a strong post and rails seldom represent here the only possible outlet from a field, as they often do in some other countries, where fences, themselves impracticable, have their gaps mended up with sturdy timber, and this alone gives a chance of escape from an otherwise secure imprisonment. A Cheshire (or North Staffordshire) fence, on the contrary, is seldom unjumpable at all, and generally fairly practicable everywhere. Even if it secures you a fall, it is one of a nature very different, both in present sensation and subsequent afterthought, to the somersault over high rails. The one probably induces only a wholesome contempt and satisfactory increase in the self-confidence that makes a man ride straight for pleasure. The other is likely to be detrimental at the time and harmful in the future, engendering a lively distrust of horseflesh and a dislike of rash experiment that is all against a man's further reputation or enjoyment. Everybody does not put it to himself in this fashion, but a good many act upon a similar course of reasoning, the result being, with most men of experience, that the majority only take timber for choice, when quite assured that they have a timber-jumper under them ; the rest go round to avoid it."

The present writer endorses "Brooksby's" view that the horse to carry you well in North Staffordshire is a quick, active horse that will not easily tire. He would add to this that the horse should not be too big ; a handy, well-bred horse that will turn quick, and is steady and sensible at banks and ditches, is the horse you want for this country.

There are two grand points in favour of the North Stafford country—foxes are plentiful and generally wild, and the country carries a rare good scent, being largely a grass country, with very little plough as a rule. The country is on the whole well provided with coverts, and of late years very considerable additions have been made in the shape of several new gorse coverts. Some of the woodlands are exceptionally large, and are great strongholds for foxes, and splendid schoolrooms for young hounds in the cubbing season, such, for instance, as the Bishop's Woods and Burnt Woods, near Drayton-in-Hales, and Swynnerton Old Park (near Swynnerton Hall and Trentham), as to the merits of which Dickins made an enthusiastic entry (already quoted) in his diary of 1872, his second season with the North Stafford. This is an oak and fir wood containing (with Harley Thorn and the heath and common adjoining) about eight hundred acres, chiefly covered with underwood, heather, and bilberry bushes, and has long been a noted stronghold for foxes. It has saved the Hunt every now and then from a blank day, and its chief drawback is that, owing to its great size and to its often carrying a poor scent, you can seldom force a fox out of covert without spending a large amount of time and trouble.

It is the property of Mr. Basil Fitzherbert of Swynnerton Hall hard by—a much-respected landowner and supporter of the Hunt, though no longer himself following hounds. The Duke of Sutherland's extensive home coverts at Trentham and Beech Cliffe are near the Old Park, and generally provide the requisite animal when drawn. The Bishop's Woods and Burnt Woods, on the Eccleshall side of the country, are altogether, we believe, upwards of eleven hundred acres in extent, and are much in the same category as the well-known Bagots Woods in the Meynell country. The Hon. Mrs. Meynell Ingram is the owner of the Burnt Woods and other large coverts in that district, which she kindly leases to the Duke at a moderate rental in the interests of fox-hunting, for which the family have always been distinguished. Bishop's Woods and other large property in that district belong to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who, we are informed, do not set a good example as landowners in the matter of wire. The most popular and fashionable and the best-known part of the North Stafford country is undoubtedly the Woore district, comprising also Doddington and Adderley. This is to be accounted for, in part, because it is more accessible than most of the North Stafford area, and also because it is no doubt a very good hunting country, resembling (as "Brooksby" has pointed out) the Cheshire in its main features; but the present writer is of opinion that the Draycot country is intrinsically little, if at all, inferior to the Woore district. Belonging to Doddington Park, the seat of Sir Delves Broughton, there are some good coverts, notably Chapel Wood, Shaw's Rough, Checkley Wood, and Wrinehill, which are seldom drawn blank. Then the Woore coverts are well known, from the days of Egerton Warburton and Mr. Wicksted down to the present time, and the very names of the Canridden, Mill Hay, and Harrow's Wood are dear to every North Stafford fox-hunter. Buerton Gorse and Highfield Gorse near Adderley are nearly always safe finds in this part. Finson's Hay Gorse, a noted gorse covert made by Captain Edwards Heathcote, is also a sure find, as a rule, in the same district. The largest fields are generally at Woore and Doddington, these meets being very handy for Cheshire men, either by road or rail, and also for the Manchester division by rail. There are also some extensive coverts near Madeley; the Gladdings, and Heighley Castle, and at Maer, the Hills, large fir woods, extend to several hundred acres, and usually abound with foxes, and are regularly visited in the cub-hunting season and afterwards. There is not much fault to be found, as a rule, with either farmers or landowners on the score of fox-preserving, and it is a rare event indeed to hear of any illegitimate slaughter of our noble foe. The woods at Sandon (the Earl of Harrowby's) are not extensive, but there are several nice small coverts, including Gayton Gorse, some of which generally hold a fox, and often provide a good sporting gallop to Chartley and the Meynell country.

Moddershall Oaks near Stone is a pretty sure find; but the Moddershall foxes are not, as a rule, very good travellers, generally contenting themselves with a ring round by Hill's Nurseries and the Stallington coverts and back again. Downs Banks and Kibblestone Gorse are two useful gorse coverts in the same district, but there is no better meet in the North Stafford country than the Bird-in-Hand for Draycot Woods. There are three principal coverts at Draycot, the property of Sir William Vavasour—Bromley Wood, about one hundred acres, Hose Wood, about the same size, and New Close Sprink, something like thirty to forty acres, and two small gorse coverts besides—one known as Mr. Dobson's Gorse; and if these should unfortunately fail to provide the right animal, there are Sherratt's Wood, Birchwood Park, and Brindley's Wood, all within easy distance, to fall back upon, and a new gorse near Leigh, lately made by that good sportsman and staunch supporter of the Hunt, Mr. John William Philips, of Heybridge. It is very seldom that they all fail, and these Draycot foxes are celebrated for running straight and long, and often for taking a fifteen-mile point right into the Meynell country. Some of the very best runs the writer has ever taken part in have been from the Draycot side, and he must own to having a strong feeling in its favour. The great points are, that the country round is nearly all grass, carrying a first-rate scent, a fair country to ride over, and the foxes are of a good wild sort, who generally disdain to turn and twist until they are dead beat, but set their mask for some distant point, determined to do or die. The writer will never forget one gallant old fox from Brindley's Wood, that was found at three o'clock in a March afternoon, and was killed near Yoxall, in the heart of the Meynell country, between five and six o'clock, the hounds not getting back to kennel till after eleven. This was twenty years ago, though it seems like yesterday, when one thinks of that delightful gallop; but we must not dwell upon this run now, as we shall have to relate it in detail in its proper place in this history.

There are other coverts and meets which we have scarcely space to describe at length, such as Cheswardine, Oakley, the seat of that fine old sportsman and staunch fox-preserver, Sir George Chetwode, who often provides a fox for us in the laurels close to his house; Stoke-by-Stone for Orange Hayes, Norton Bridge for Shallowford Gorse, Seighford for the Moor Covert and William's Wood, etc., Dilhorn Hall for the Dilhorn coverts, Barlaston for the Hall coverts, Trentham for the Home coverts and New Park, Croxden Abbey for Chipperlee and Nothill, and Draycot Village for Draycot Cross and Cheadle Common, besides many others. The Adderley coverts (the property of Mr. Corbet) belong to the North Stafford country, though under a temporary arrangement the North Staffordshire Hunt Committee allow Mr. Corbet to draw them without acquiring any right. Birchwood Park, between Draycot Woods and Chartley, is a neutral covert with the Meynell Hunt, the North Staffordshire and the Meynell each drawing it in alternate months. The hounds hunt four days a week, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday being the regular days. The rule as to fixtures has varied from time to time considerably, but now and for some years past the rule has been, and is as follows: Monday for the Woore and Doddington country; Wednesday for the Draycot, Sandon, and Stone side; Friday for the Seighford and Eccleshall side; and Saturday for the Trentham and Maer district. The Monday meets are easily reached by outsiders by rail to Crewe, Market Drayton, or Pipe Gate. The Wednesday meets by rail to Stone, Cresswell, or Blythe Bridge. Friday as a rule by rail to Norton Bridge; and Saturday, either from Trentham or Stoke. Any sportsman wishing to come to the country for hunting through the season may find good quarters for himself and stud at any of the hotels at Stoke, Newcastle, Stone, or Trentham, and will be fairly in the centre of the Hunt.

The "wire" question is likely to come to the front in the North Stafford country, as in so many Hunts, unfortunately, at the present time. There is a good deal of barbed wire now used in many districts in the North Stafford country, and generally mixed with the thorn fence in a dangerous manner for horse and rider. The Eccleshall side is thought to be the worst in this respect. The Hunt has some years since established a wire fund, with a view to taking down the wire at the commencement of the hunting season, and putting it up again at the finish, and it is hoped that the landowners and farmers of the district, now that public attention has been called to the matter, will do their best to co-operate with the Master and the members of the Hunt in discountenancing such a dangerous and unsatisfactory mode of strengthening their fences.

The Hunt accounts for the season of 1900–1 show an expenditure of upwards of £400 in connection with the wire fund and the fencing account, including laying about five and a half miles of fences on twenty-eight farms in the Hunt free of charge, at a cost of over £113. The Duke is most anxious on this subject of fencing, and has at considerable cost imported skilled hedgers from Warwickshire in order to show the tenant farmers how to improve and strengthen their fences without using the objectionable wire; and with this object in view a circular has been sent out from Trentham, asking farmers and others to state—

"1. Whether there are any suitable fences for laying in your part of the country.

"2. Names of farmers in your district wishing to avail themselves of the services of these men, who will teach their labourers the art of laying fences."

We understand that this experiment has been attended with fairly satisfactory results, and it is fervently to be hoped that the wire grievance will rather subside than increase. The feeling of owners and occupiers generally towards the Hunt, and especially towards the noble Master, is so friendly and cordial that we feel sure, when the question is fairly understood by the farmers, they will do their best to meet the views of the members of the Hunt. It is unfortunate that, as a rule, not many farmers in North Staffordshire are hunting men, so that the wire question is not brought home to them as it would be if they, as a class, were themselves in the habit of hunting, and meeting fox-hunters, and hearing hunting topics discussed from day to day. There have already been several accidents from wire in the North Stafford country, fortunately none of them very serious; but any day one might hear of some terrible tragedy from this cause, and at this the writer feels sure no one would grieve more than the farmer who had thoughtlessly been at the bottom of the mischief.

Several years ago the Hunt Committee passed certain resolutions on the subject of wire which have been printed and circulated through the North Stafford country, the effect of which may be shortly stated as follows: The country was divided into five districts, with a chairman and committee for each district, the committee to endeavour to remove all dangerous wire by the beginning of November, and to supply timber, etc., in its place; timber depôts being fixed in convenient places, and the committee being responsible for its being properly used. Information as to wire to be given to the committee at the earliest possible date. A fixed price to be arranged, if possible, for putting down posts and rails, and the chairmen of committees to be responsible to the Hunt committee. Accounts to be presented yearly. The chairman of each committee to send men round to make up gaps caused by the Hunt when necessary. Any cases of wire put up to be reported by the committees to their chairmen.

All landowners are requested to insert a clause in their farm agreements, preventing the erection of wire by their tenants.

It will at least be seen that the Master and the Hunt Committee have made strenuous and systematic efforts to minimize the wire danger, and in consequence it is believed that the wire is generally well signalled now throughout the Hunt where it is still used.

It is only within the last few days that the present writer read in one of the daily papers an announcement that a well-known Master of one of our leading packs of hounds was about to give up his position entirely on account of this hateful wire. May we commend to the notice of our agricultural friends, Whyte Melville's excellent lines on this subject?—

"Good fellows, good sportsmen of every degree,
Who live by the land, will you listen to me?
To teach you your business I offer no claim,
But the man who looks on sees a deal of the game,
And your thrift while I honour, your acres admire,
I think you're mistaken to fence them with wire.

"No; twist us your binders as strong as you will,
We must all take our chances of cropper and spill;
There are scores of young ashes to stiffen the gaps,
And a blind double ditch is the surest of traps;
But remember, fair sportsmen fair usage require,
So up with the timber and down with the wire."

Fortunately, the too frequent collision between gamekeepers and huntsmen, between pheasants and foxes, has not been much in evidence in the North Stafford country. We have plenty of landowners and sportsmen who are keen enough about rearing and preserving pheasants, but happily most of them are, if possible, still more keen about preserving foxes, so that we seldom hear any well-founded complaint against either landowners or gamekeepers on this score. In this connection one is reminded of a good old story of "Jem" Hills, the well-known old huntsman of the Heythrop, sometime in the fifties or early sixties. He had to draw some coverts where the keeper was strongly suspected of foul play with foxes, and drew them blank as usual. As he was blowing his hounds out of the last covert, the keeper came up with—

"Morning, Mr. Hills. 'Twas a rough night; I'm afraid our foxes are all underground."

"Be they?" said the old huntsman. "Who put 'em there?" and trotted off with a grim smile, feeling that he had not only had the last word, but that his Parthian arrow had hit the bull's-eye.

The poultry and covert fund business is an important department in any Hunt, and in the North Stafford Hunt we have reason to think it is as well managed as anywhere. The Committee is a representative one, comprising residents in almost every part of the hunting area, and a large number of leading farmers. Twice in each year the meetings of the Committee are held at the Stoke Hotel in October and March or April, and the sum now paid to the hon. secretary, Mr. R. N. Wood (from £400 to £450), is almost entirely spent in satisfying or endeavouring to satisfy farmers for the loss of poultry, some little being used to pay the rent of gorse coverts, but the finds and earth-stopping, and the rents of many large coverts, are paid by the Duke. It is only at such meetings that one item of the difficulties of hunting a country comes prominently forward. Large committees like this relieve a Master of Hounds of great responsibility, as he knows that all just and honest claims will have every attention. But, after all said and done, much is put down to the poor fox which he has not had his teeth into, for there are such things as foxes with two legs, also sheep-dogs and mongrels of all kinds that worry sheep, eat lambs, and make off with poultry. The fox, in truth, has many enemies besides a pack of hounds. With regard to lambs being killed by foxes, this is a doubtful question. No doubt they will eat a dead one, but they will not attack a ewe with a lamb by her side. A case is known in this country of a farmer having some strong lambs, and, visiting them in the field the first thing in the morning, found them well and apparently healthy, but in the evening on a second visit two were dead with not a mark on them, so he left them there. On going to remove them in the morning, he found they had been mutilated, and, as he described it, if he had not seen the dead carcases the night before without a trace of the cause of death he should have said they had been killed by a fox. There is no case on record to our knowledge of any one seeing a lamb killed by a fox. Dogs, we know, will do this, as is seen out hunting. A pack of hounds running through a field with ewes and lambs will sometimes snap up one and kill it, under the eyes of huntsman and whip, before it can be prevented. The fox is naturally a shy animal, and will not attack ewes with a lamb. In many cases ewes are left to themselves, and lambs are born dead. These are the ones foxes eat. Like all the rest of the world, foxes must eat, and what they love best is a rabbit, or rats, if they can get them, and no doubt their nature is to destroy more than they can consume. Blood is what a fox requires to keep him healthy, and if he gets into a hen-roost, he will make sad havoc by killing many and biting their heads off, and leaving all but the one he carries off for his dinner. This, no doubt, is to obtain blood, which he gets by this mode of execution.

The mange we hear so much about in the present day is probably caused to a great extent by the artificial manner in which foxes are preserved. Keepers feed them on offal which is void of blood, and foxes fed in this way, coming in contact with the wild-bred ones, distribute the disease through the earths all over the country. Here the badger comes in useful, for in using the fox earths, his sharp and rough coat removes the soil on the roof and floor, and so gives a fresh lining. During the time this operation is going on a fox would discontinue to use the earth, but on his return he finds his home empty and swept. Artificial earths are bad in principle; they may answer in some open country short of woods, but in a country like this, where large coverts abound, they are a great mistake. To turn a fox into an artificial earth is much the same as putting a man into a damp bed. A fox will use a dry drain, but not a wet one, unless hard pressed by hounds, when he will take shelter anywhere. The North Stafford hounds one day, after a sharp run, marked a fox to ground apparently in a rabbit-hole by the side of a slanting tree in the Bitterns. Dickins sent for spades and started digging, when our friend Reynard was seen up the tree watching the operation. As Joe Maiden used to say, after casting the hounds all round his hat and not hitting him off, "He has either gone up to heaven or down into the earth;" but on this occasion he had used a ladder that did not reach as far as he would have liked to go, so was left to the mercy of Stephen Dickins, who (like the fox above described) loved blood, not for himself, except to ride on, but for his hounds.

Talking of blood, the Covert Fund Committee get their share of being bled. On one occasion a good old lady had a few nice fat ducks ready for market, and, having dressed them ready for sale, took the heads and wings and a few feathers and distributed them close to her house, and asked her neighbours to come and see the fearful slaughter that had taken place. Next day she took herself off to see the late Colonel Reginald Buller, for it was in his part of the country the murder had been committed. With tears in her eyes she told her sad tale, and the Colonel, without further inquiry, paid the bill. Two days later he was met by a man from that district, who said—

"Colonel, I hope you didn't pay Mrs. So-and-so for her ducks."

"Yes," said the Colonel, "I did. Why not?"

"Because," said the man, "the fox never had them. She killed them herself, and chucked their heads about, and told every one the fox had killed them, and all this time they were in the cellar dressed ready for market, and afterwards sold ;"—and so was the Colonel.

On one occasion Mr. Wood called to see a lady who had sent in a big bill for poultry, and on his remonstrating with her for her high charges, she said (not knowing him by sight, only by name)—

"Oh, Mr. Reginald Wood always pays me that price."

He assured her this was not the case, as he had the best reason to know, adding—

"I happen to be Mr. Reginald Wood."

The good lady's countenance was worth seeing when she heard this announcement.

Stephen Dickins, late one afternoon, hunting a fox through the Burnt Woods, brought a line out on the Broughton Birches side, and hounds hunting slowly over some plough, a man at work in the field asked him what he was hunting.

"A fox, of course," said Dickins.

"And do you think you'll catch him?" said the man.

"I shall try," said Dickins.

"I'm sure you won't," said the man.

"Why not?" said Dickins.

"Because he went the other way ten minutes ago."

Dickins's face went very long, as it did at certain times, and he remarked to Mr. Reginald Wood, who was about the only one of the field left—

"I think we had better go home, sir;" and home they went.

It only shows what an art woodland hunting is, and how easily huntsman and hounds can miss killing a fox.

Dickins, as remarked before, was always keen for blood, and to see him lifting his feet and stamping during the operation of breaking up a fox was most amusing. Quite unconscious himself of this movement, it was to the looker-on a sort of amateur war-dance over his dead foe. Riding home from hunting one evening with an old member of the Hunt, Dickins related a story of old Joe the runner. His wife called at the kennels one summer in great distress, and informed him of the death of the old man, and asked for help and a sheet to bury him in ; this was supplied, and no more was heard about it till one morning in the autumn, Dickins arriving at the covert side with his hounds for cub-hunting, the first person to receive him was his friend Joe, sitting on a gate, very much alive indeed.

# CHAPTER VII.

## TRENTHAM—FAMILY HISTORY OF THE LEVESON-GOWERS—THE DUCHESS-COUNTESS—THE FRENCH REVOLUTION—DUCHESS HARRIET.

When it became an open secret, towards the end of 1873 or the early part of 1874, that Colonel Nugent was about to retire from the Mastership, there never was the slightest doubt in the minds of the leading members of the Hunt, that if Lord Stafford was willing to undertake the responsibilities of management, there was no need to look in any other quarter for the new Master, and the satisfaction was general when it became known that the young Marquis of Stafford had agreed to accept the vacant post. This was felt at the time to be quite an ideal arrangement, and the experience of nearly thirty years has only confirmed the anticipation. There were many and obvious reasons in favour of the appointment, from the point of view of the supporters of the Hunt.

In the first place, it is always considered of prime importance to have a genuine resident in the county at the head of the Hunt, if possible, and when that resident happens to be heir to a large territorial estate and a ducal position second to none, and is young and deservedly popular, a keen sportsman, fond of hounds, with the kennels provided by his own family and on the family estate, himself living at Trentham, in the very centre of the Hunt, no wonder that the fox-hunters of North Staffordshire rejoiced to hear the good news; every one felt that there was a good time coming for the N.S. Hunt, and the natural regret at the retirement of Colonel Nugent was tempered by the feeling of satisfaction that he was to be succeeded by one so popular and so much esteemed as the Marquis of Stafford. It was not forgotten, either, that the ducal house of Trentham had not only liberally, at their own cost, provided kennels for the pack and homes for the Hunt servants ever since 1862, but had also been munificent subscribers every year to the Hunt funds. So everything combined to make the new arrangement a most fitting and popular one, not only with the members of the Hunt, but with the landowners and farmers throughout the district. A short description of Trentham and some of its most famous occupants may not be out of place at this stage of our history. Lord Beaconsfield, in his romance "Lothair," has left us a striking, if somewhat imaginative, sketch of the place—

> "It would be difficult," he says, "to find a fairer scene than Trentham* offered, especially in the lustrous effulgence of a glorious English summer. It was an Italian palace of freestone; vast, ornate, and in scrupulous condition, its spacious and graceful chambers filled with treasures of art, and rising itself from statued and stately terraces. At their foot spread a garden domain of considerable extent, bright with flowers, dim with coverts of rare shrubs, and musical with fountains. Its limit reached a park with timber such as the Midland counties alone can produce. The fallow deer trooped among its ferny solitudes and gigantic oaks; but beyond the waters of the broad and winding lake the scene became more savage, and the eye caught the dark form of the red deer on some jutting mount, shrinking with scorn from communion with his gentler brethren."

The "freestone" and the "red deer" are due to the novelist's imagination, but in other respects the above description is considered to be quite truthful and accurate. There was an old house at Trentham figured in Plot's "History of Staffordshire," a handsome Elizabethan structure, built in the seventeenth century by Sir Richard Leveson, and destroyed early in the eighteenth by some unknown successor to the estate and title, whose work of destruction does not appear to have earned the approval of succeeding generations. The old residence was evidently a delightful place, picturesque and quaint, with

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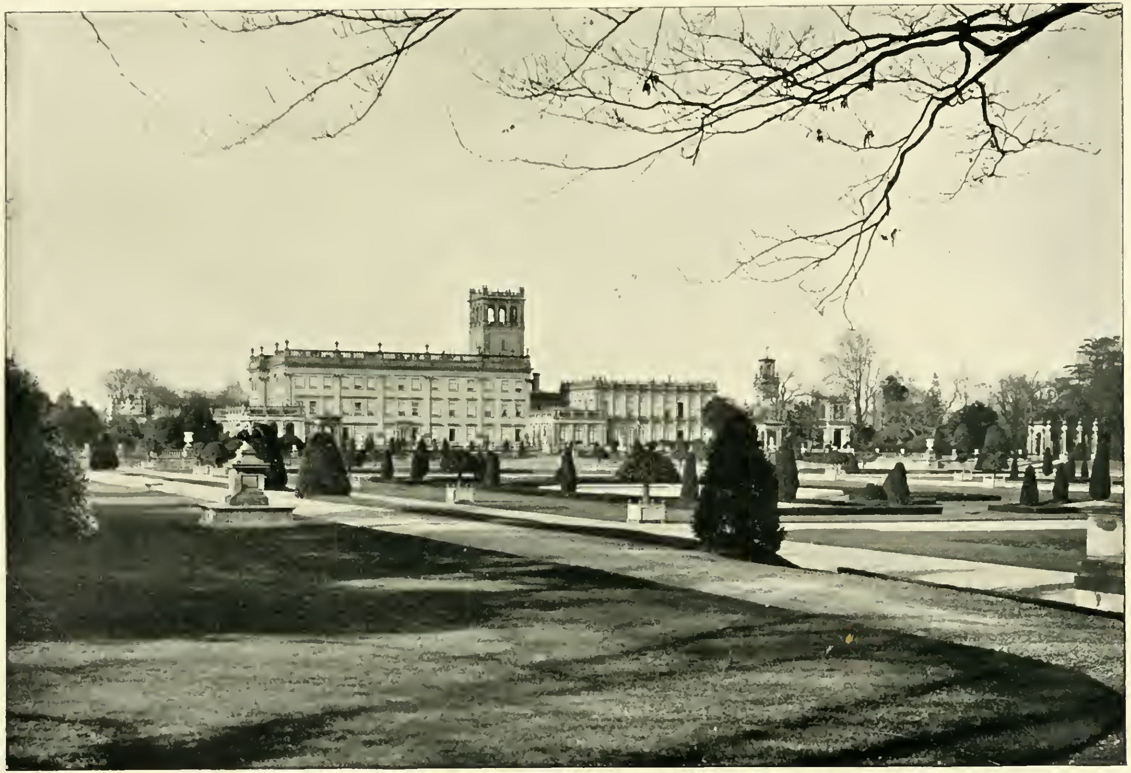
* Lord Beaconsfield disguises the identity slightly as "Brentham."



TRENTHAM HALL.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

high gables, tall chimneys, bay windows, and a wide terrace in front, encircled by a balustrade formed of an open-work lettered inscription. In place of the old hall, was built a long flat house of red brick with stone facings,

> "in imitation," says Lord Ronald Gower in his reminiscences, "of one of the ugliest houses in the land, old Buckingham House. As the fortune of the family increased so did the size of this building. But it was only when Sir Charles Barry was employed that it ceased to be supremely hideous. It is now, in spite of the long ugly central portion, a really handsome mansion. The entrance porch and adjacent colonnade, as well as the private wing, with its open terrace of two stories high, are as perfect imitations of pure Italian architecture as Barry ever designed. I know of nothing more graceful and happy in its way than the half-circle of a colonnade that forms at once a passage, a fernery, and a vestibule, leading from the body of the house to the park entrance. But it is not even what Barry has done for Trentham that has made it one of the great lions of English show places. The late Duke of Devonshire—and a better judge could not easily have been found—used to say that in his opinion the garden front at Trentham was unrivalled, his own glorious Chatsworth not excepted."

The history of the house of Trentham and of the Leveson-Gowers is not very eventful, and it would scarcely be expected, in a history of the North Staffordshire Hunt, that it should be dealt with at any length, but it may be of interest to say that the Trentham estate came to the Levesons by descent in the female line from Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and his queen consort. Sir John Leveson, in the time of James I., left at his death two daughters, his co-heiresses. One of these, Frances, married Sir Thomas Gower, a Yorkshire cavalier, and brought as her jointure Trentham, besides other property in Staffordshire and Salop, both, especially the latter, well stored with coal. This alliance, and others in later times equally productive of great territorial results, have brought the house of Trentham into its present unique position. To quote Lord Ronald again—

> "Trentham is full of contrasts; the old Norman church attached to the modern Italian-like looking building is one of them. Nothing can be less suggestive of beauty than that district of North Staffordshire known as the Potteries. There it seems always muddy and miserable, squalid and unclean. Yet within a couple of miles from Stoke lies this wonderful garden of Trentham, gay with hanging woods mirrored in the still lake, with its terraces and statues, its shrubberies and miles of forcing houses, its great park and forest trees. A boon indeed

to the densely packed population that live in the Potteries such a park as that at Trentham must be, for the park is open to the public. One can easily understand that among the old ancestral trees and green drives a little of the dull cares and struggles of an English artisan's hard-won life may occasionally be forgotten. . . . The house is more remarkable for comfort than for any internal magnificence. The principal rooms are rather low and narrow, but admirably installed and cheerful, facing the south, looking out on that matchless view of garden, wood, and lake."

Before the time of Duchess Harriet (grandmother of the present Duke) it appears that the present garden was only an ordinary expanse of meadow land, watered by a stream. The combination of high artistic taste and abundant means has produced as a result a scene that, as Lord R. Gower says, "has no rival out of Italy." Trentham has on several occasions been honoured with visits from royal guests. The Duke of Cumberland, the hero of Culloden, was there in the eighteenth century. Some fifty years afterwards the Prince Regent (afterwards George IV.) paid Trentham a visit; there is a tradition that he was placed in what was then the principal guest-chamber looking out on the old churchyard, and that His Royal Highness, disliking the view of the ghostly and silent tombs, ordered the shutters to be closed, the curtains drawn, and the candles lighted, although it was a bright summer's day, and broad daylight at the time. There is still, we believe, at Trentham a reminiscence of this royal visit in the shape of a very ghostly but majestic four-poster, gorgeous with crimson velvet curtains. In more modern times the Prince and Princess of Wales (now our gracious King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra) have paid several visits to Trentham; and, somewhere in the sixties or seventies, the Shah of Persia also visited Trentham, and has told the world of his visit, and of his English experiences generally, in a diary of his travels which he shortly afterwards published. Prescott, the American historian, gives a graphic account of his visit to Trentham in 1850, which is well worth quoting—

"From Castle Howard," he says (in a letter to his wife, published in Ticknor's "Life of Prescott"), "we proceeded to Trentham, in Staffordshire, the Duchess of Sutherland's favourite seat, and a splendid place it is. We met her at

Derby, she having set out the day before us. We both arrived too late for the train, so she put post-horses to her barouche, and she and Lady Constance, a blooming English girl, posted it for thirty-six miles, reaching Trentham at ten in the evening, an open barouche, and cool enough." After describing the place, the lake, and the gardens, Prescott concludes, "It is the temple of taste, and its charming mistress created it all. As I was coming away, she asked me to walk with her into the gardens, and led me to a spot where several men were at work having a great hole prepared. A large evergreen tree was held up by the gardener, and I was requested to help set it in its place, and to throw some shovelfuls of earth on it. In fact, I was to leave an evergreen memorial, 'which,' said she, 'my children shall see hereafter, and know by whom it was planted.'"

It is scarcely necessary to explain that the Duchess of Sutherland here spoken of with so much enthusiasm was Duchess Harriet (wife of the second Duke, and sister of the Earl of Carlisle), so well known in the first half of the Victorian reign, not only as the attached personal friend of the Queen, and for many years her Mistress of the Robes, but as a warm friend and supporter of all that was good in the paths of art and taste and of public spirit and philanthropy. Lady Constance, above referred to as "a blooming English girl," some three years afterwards married Earl Grosvenor, and eventually became Duchess of Westminster. Lord and Lady Grosvenor are thus referred to in a hunting song written in 1853, by Egerton Warburton, entitled "Farmer Dobbin":

"I see'd the 'Arl ov Grosvenor, a loikely lad to roid;
I see'd a soight worth aw the rest, his farenchy young broid."

The present writer well remembers, when he was occasionally able to get a day with Mr. Davenport's hounds as a youngster, some fifty years ago, how much he was impressed with the grace and beauty of Lady Constance Leveson-Gower, and of the Marchioness of Stafford, then a young bride, afterwards the third Duchess of Sutherland, both of whom used, now and then, to hunt with the North Staffordshire Hounds when the family were at Trentham.

We have already said that this is not quite the place for a detailed history of the House of Sutherland, but a few brief historical details may be of interest, having regard to the close connection between the Hunt and the noble family at Trentham.

Originally, as is well known, the Gowers were a Yorkshire family, but some time in the seventeenth century they migrated from Yorkshire into Staffordshire, having become (as we have already mentioned), through marriage with the Levesons, entitled to Trentham and other large estates in Staffordshire and Shropshire.

One of the Levesons, at least, rose to considerable distinction, viz. Sir Richard Leveson, who served in her Majesty's fleet, under Drake, against the Spaniards, and himself became an admiral. There is a fine portrait of this ancestor at Trentham. The first peerage was created in 1702, the title being Baron Gower.

In 1745 the second Lord Gower was promoted to an earldom, and it is to his credit that he threw up his office of Lord President of the Council, rather than countenance the King and his Ministry in going to war with America, declaring in a manly letter to the Prime Minister that, grateful as he felt for the royal favour accorded him, he could not think it his duty "to preserve a system which must end in ruin to his Majesty and the country." In 1786 Earl Gower was created Marquis of Stafford, and died in 1803.

His eldest son, the second Marquis, afterwards the first Duke of Sutherland, married, in 1785 (when Viscount Trentham), Elizabeth, in her own right Countess of Sutherland, and thus was brought, not only an ancient title, but a county, as large as a principality, into the already powerful and wealthy family of Leveson-Gower. The interesting part of the first Duke's history is that portion which is connected with the terrible days of the first French Revolution, and the tragic fate of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette. He was English ambassador at the court of Louis XVI., and both he and his "Duchess-Countess" (as she was afterwards usually called), enjoyed the friendship of the French King and Queen, and were able, before things reached their worst point, to be of some service to the ill-fated Royal pair.

The "Duchess-Countess" was a lady of real talent and accomplishments, and of exceptional beauty, and has left behind her hundreds of water-colour drawings, which are far superior to the efforts of most amateurs. She was also a great friend and supporter of many of the artists of her day, and in every way must be regarded as one of the *grandes dames* of her age. She had the proud distinction of being descended from the Royal House of Scotland, for one of the Earls of Sutherland wedded a daughter of the Bruce, and consequently it was her right to bear before the Monarch, when crowned King of Scotland, the great sword of state, and through the Duchess-Countess the present Duke has the right to quarter the Royal Arms with his own. There is a lovely portrait of the Duchess-Countess at Trentham.* The second Marquis and first Duke was not, apparently, a man of ambition or of striking talent, but he was evidently a model landlord, a good friend to art and artists, and deserves to be remembered as having presented to the nation the finest Rubens now in the National Gallery, and as having, at his own expense, formed no less than four hundred and fifty miles of capital public roads in Sutherlandshire, where none had previously existed at all. He died at Dunrobin in 1833, only a few months after the creation of the dukedom.

The Duchess-Countess survived the first Duke nearly six years, dying at an advanced age in the year 1839. It was through this marriage that Dunrobin Castle, the "lordly castle by the sea," of which we reproduce a photograph in this volume, came into the possession of the Leveson-Gower family. Of this castle Lord Ronald Gower well says—

> "Both for its beauty and its site, Dunrobin is like a poet's dream realized. Though far grander are the historic castles on the Loire, royal Pau, and imperial Heidelberg, and richer in legend, lore, and story a hundred castles on the Rhine, yet none of these has, like the home of Macbeth, 'a more pleasant seat' than the old stronghold of the thanes and earls of Sutherland. So far back as the end of the eleventh century, Dunrobin—then but a kernel of the present pile—was inhabited by the ancestors of the race who still pass the close of summer within its walls. It even claims to be the oldest inhabited building in the British Isles.

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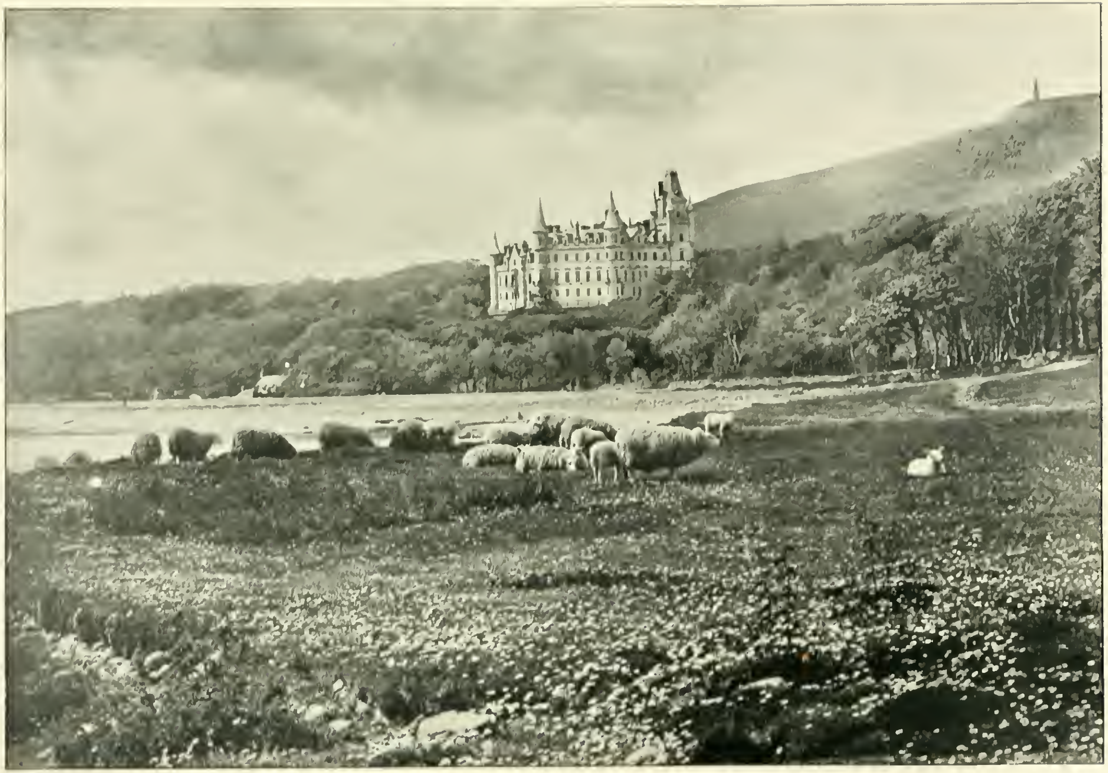
* By Romney. She also sat to Reynolds, Hoppner, and Lawrence.

> The older part of the castle, which has stood many a siege in the wild days of Scottish history, is now almost hidden by the modern building—a combination of French and Scottish architecture introduced into Scotland in the days of Queen Mary. Gracefully do the turrets and tapering roofs of the lighter French style wed with the more massive and feudal Scotch fortress, keep, and donjon. The graceful turrets, the towers with their extinguisher-shaped roofs, the machicolated parapets, the corbelled ramparts, and the quaintly shaped windows, do not in any way detract from the internal beauty of the building. The gardens are worthy of the castle. Two hundred years ago the old chronicler of the House of Sutherland, Sir Robert Gordon, describes the '*fair orchards wher ther be pleasant gardens planted with all kynds of froots, hearbs, and floors used in this kingdome, and abundance of good saphron, tobacco, and rosemarie.* The froot heir,' he adds, 'is excellent, chiefly the pears and cherries.' An old pear tree, that may well have seen two hundred summers, is a last relic of this pleasant garden, and still yields a handsome crop of fruit. Dunrobin, like Melrose, to be seen aright, should be seen under the spell of moonlight. Beautiful as is the view over the Firth of the distant hills of Banff and Aberdeen, and those of the softer and lower range of Inverness and Moray, the scene is still more witching when the silvery light dances over the waves. I have seen Venice and Heidelberg, the Alhambra and the Roman Colosseum, under the moon's rays; but never to me that light of night illumined a fairer scene than the old nest of my northern race on the far-away Sutherland coast."

The Duchess-Countess Elizabeth, the fair chatelaine of Dunrobin, who was the only daughter of William, seventeenth Earl of Sutherland, was not allowed to take possession of the title and the Sutherland estates without litigation, for in her early infancy, after her parents' death, her title was disputed by two claimants; but, after a long lawsuit, the House of Lords decided in her favour in the year 1771, and she thus became Countess of Sutherland and Baroness Strathnaver in her own right.

> "The Countess's right," says Donglas, "was thus established to the most ancient title existing in Britain—a decision productive of the highest national satisfaction, the illustrious orphan having excited feelings of very lively interest, and public rejoicings took place in different parts of Scotland in consequence."

It was in 1785 that the Countess of Sutherland, as above mentioned, gave her hand to the heir of Trentham, and brought her large possessions to swell the already large estates of the Leveson-Gowers. The Gaelic title of this great heiress was "Banza-Mohr-ar-Chat," which, when interpreted, means "The Great Lady of the Clan Sutherland." She it was who, during the great war with France



DUNROBIN CASTLE FROM THE EAST.

*From a photo by A. M. Dixon, Golspie.*

at the close of the eighteenth century, raised at her own expense a regiment of her clansmen—the 93rd or Sutherland Highlanders. A few years after her marriage, her husband—then Marquis of Stafford—was appointed ambassador to the court of Louis XVI. at Paris, and a time of anxiety and trouble set in for the young married pair. Lord Ronald Gower says of the Duchess-Countess at this period of her history—

> "Although few of her letters have been preserved, they bear the mark of having been written by no ordinary character. Her sympathy for, and the little assistance that she was able to render to, the unfortunate Queen of France are historical, and are still remembered with gratitude in the Faubourg St. Germain. Unluckily, the letters she wrote during the period of her husband's embassy are few and short. No diary of that tremendous period by her has been found, although she is reported to have kept one; perhaps when escaping from Paris it was considered prudent to destroy it. I have always regretted not having been able to see her; but, having been born some years after her death, I can only picture her from the description of those who had the good fortune of knowing her. A stately, yet gracious lady was she. In her own country she was regarded as a kind of chieftain, and as Maria Theresa was styled the Empress Queen, so Elizabeth Sutherland was known as the Duchess-Countess when in later years her husband was raised from the Marquisate of Stafford to the Dukedom of Sutherland. Byron, a good judge of woman's looks, was introduced to her at Holland House in 1813—in her turban days. 'She is handsome,' he writes of her in his journal, 'and must have been beautiful, and her manners,' he adds, 'are princessly.' In 1793 she is described as follows in her passport, when with husband and children she had to escape from Paris: '*Madame Elizabeth, Comtesse de Sutherland*,' runs the passport, '*épouse de M. l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre, agée de 27 ans, taille de cinq pieds, cheveux et sourcils chatain clair, yeux bruns chatains, nez bien fait, bouche petite, menton rond, front bas, visage un peu long*.' So serious had things become in that capital, that it was considered necessary to chalk up on the doors of the Embassy the words '*Ambassade d'Angleterre*' to protect the place from the mob. It was during their hurried journey to the coast that, I believe, Lady Sutherland destroyed the journal of her sojourn in Paris. They were arrested and brought before the Revolutionary tribunal at Abbeville, but allowed, after some trouble, to proceed on their way to England. Lady Sutherland was something better than a mere lady of old lineage and vast possessions, with titles in her own right and royal blood in her veins. For she possessed remarkable talent, and had she not been born a peeress, and had she not become the wife of the richest patrician in England, she might perhaps have left a distinguished name amongst the women whose talents are known to all in their country and century. Those who have seen her beautiful landscapes will not think this praise extravagant. They are worthy of the hand of a professional painter, and are the more remarkable when it is remembered that the particular branch of art in which she excelled—scenery in water-colours, and which has since her day attained such excellence in this country—was seventy years ago practised by but a few artists, and by still fewer amateurs. Of these drawings, or rather paintings, the Duchess-Countess left

hundreds of specimens, mostly views of scenes in her native Sutherland, drawn on the spot, and coloured with but two or three tints, blue and grey and sepia. Delightfully tender and delicate are these landscapes, the effects of cloud and mist being admirably given. In those days an amateur artist had not the facilities of coming before the public that now exist, and these admirable drawings—real works of art—are known to but very few. Lady Sutherland, however, did publish, or rather had printed, a book of her drawings. This consists of a series of etchings illustrating scenes in the Orkneys and on the north-eastern coast of Sutherland; they include some interiors of ancient churches in which Wenceslaus Hollar would have delighted. That a woman of such talent, and filling so worthily a high place in the society of her day, should know and be known by the most eminent men of her country was a matter of course. Besides Walter Scott, she knew and corresponded with witty and learned Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Lord Murray, and other of the most eminent of her countrymen. Owing to the false delicacy that destroys letters after the death of the writer, few of hers remain. . . . An artist herself, the Duchess-Countess must have had frequent opportunities of seeing and knowing the best of her day—from Romney and Reynolds down to Opie and Lawrence, all of whom painted her portrait. Among Scotch artists she may have remembered Ramsay as a child; she certainly knew Wilkie in her old age. To poor Haydon she was a kind friend, as an entry in that gifted but unfortunate artist's diary proves. It was probably owing to his wife's influence and her love of art that Lord Stafford distinguished himself as an enlightened and liberal patron of art. When he succeeded to the property of the Duke of Bridgewater, he found himself the owner of the finest private collection of paintings in the world. The nucleus of this gallery—known throughout the art-world of Europe as the Bridgewater, or later on, as it was named, the Stafford, Gallery—had been formed by the purchase of the finest pictures in the celebrated Orleans collection, sold to Lord Carlisle, to the Duke of Bridgewater, and to the Marquis of Stafford, shortly after the Revolution. Lord Stafford deserves credit for having been one of the first owners of works of art in London to throw open his gallery to the public. . . . Lord Stafford, or—to call him by his last title, which he only lived to bear a few months—the first Duke of Sutherland, encouraged by liberal purchases modern British art: Jackson, Stothard, Haydon, Bird, Westall, Danby, Opie, Howard, Prout, Phillips, Lawrence, and many more English artists, are represented with more or less success on the walls of Stafford House, Trentham, Lilleshall, and Dunrobin."

The second Duke, who was born in 1786, had been the playmate of the Dauphin in Paris, and could well recollect the terrible days of the French Revolution. His life was throughout a tranquil one, spent quietly amongst his books and works of art. He was debarred by deafness from taking any part in public life, and from the same cause shut out from general society, so that he passed the greater part of his life in comparative retirement. He was fortunate in his marriage; in his wife (before her marriage Lady Harriet Howard) he found a companion and helpmeet in every way suited to him, so that, in spite of the infirmity just referred to, life at Trentham, Stafford House, and Dunrobin passed as smoothly and happily as possible, until, rather suddenly, the end came at Trentham through an attack of paralysis, to which the Duke succumbed early in the year 1861. The second Duke, although never in the least degree a sportsman, was nevertheless a good friend and supporter of the North Staffordshire Hounds, and it was in his time that the kennels were built, though the hounds were not removed there till after his death.

His wife, Duchess Harriet, survived him for seven years, and was so memorable a personage that she deserves rather more than the passing notice we have already given to her name. Lady Harriet Howard was the daughter of the sixth Earl of Carlisle, and sister to the seventh Earl of Carlisle, of whom Thackeray wrote that he was "beloved as widely as he is known, a man most kind, accomplished, gentle, friendly, and pure." Lord Carlisle was homely in features and appearance, his sister Harriet of remarkable beauty and dignity, but although so different in appearance, it is evident that in character and disposition the brother and sister were essentially alike. As Lord Ronald Gower says of them with natural enthusiasm, but with undoubted truth and sincerity, "Alike in their power of attaching to them all that came within the charm of their society; alike in their love of all that is good, and true, and just, and beautiful in this world; alike in their abhorrence of tyranny, meanness, and cruelty—indeed, were there more like unto these two, the world would be a brighter and a better one."

The Duchess was a great admirer of Mr. Gladstone, both as a public man and as a friend in private life, and an intimate friendship existed between them until her death, in 1868. A few days before the end, Mr. Gladstone wrote thus with reference to the illness of the Duchess, which was then known to be beyond any hope of recovery: "I know enough to conceive with what feelings those who stand much nearer to her must contemplate what is coming, for I feel that even to me the removal of that noble and tender spirit from the world will leave a blank place in life, not to be filled up."

Our readers will gather, from what has been already said, that the present beauties of Trentham, both as to the house itself and the lovely gardens and lake, are due, in great measure, to the refined taste and judicious expenditure of the second Duke and his Duchess. Although the history of the family has been for the most part uneventful, and the holders of the title have not gone in for public distinction, yet it is evident that as great landowners they have done their duty unostentatiously, but well; and if they have not striven to shine as statesmen or warriors, they have dwelt among their own people and have won golden opinions from their neighbours and tenantry for kindness and generosity, and we may say without flattery that the present Duke has inherited the personal charm and kindness of heart which have, in a marked degree, distinguished most of his ancestors.

The third Duke was the first of the House of Gower in modern times who showed any particular love of sport, and although he was never a constant follower of the hounds, owing to his having many calls upon his time and attention away from Staffordshire, yet he was always a liberal supporter of the Hunt, and a generous subscriber of five hundred pounds a year to the Hunt funds, and it must never be forgotten that it was in his time and on his initiative that the kennels at Trentham were fitted for the reception of the hounds and generously lent to the Hunt, although at that time the present Master was only eleven years old, the hounds were under the sole management and the private property of Mr. Davenport—they were not even a subscription pack—and there was no apparent probability that there would ever be any close connection between the ducal family of Trentham and the management of the North Staffordshire Hounds; so that the fox-hunting fraternity in North Staffordshire should never forget, or

THE THIRD DUKE OF SUTHERLAND, K.G.

*Photo by Lewis.*

undervalue, the kind and unselfish help given by the third Duke of Sutherland in furtherance of the sport in which he himself took no great personal share. We feel sure our readers will agree that we have now said enough about the annals of Trentham, and that it is time we should return to the proper history of the Hunt itself.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"G. S. L." ON THE NORTH STAFFORD HOUNDS — PUPPY JUDGING SHOW AND LUNCHEON—"THE OLD WOODEN PLOUGH"—NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE SONG.

The North Staffordshire Hunt, from the very commencement of its history, and right through to the present date, has been fortunate in possessing Masters who have spared neither expense nor pains in hound-breeding, and while bringing to bear consummate knowledge and experience of the subject, have been ably supported by such all-round huntsmen as Wells, Maiden, Dickins, and Boxall, a quartette who would be hard to beat in any country, alike for kennel management and hound knowledge as for ability in the field. With regard to Mr. Wicksted, judging from all accounts that are available, and from the knowledge we have of hounds bred originally from his pack, it is abundantly clear that he was an exceptional judge of a hound, and that his success in hound breeding and management was far above the average of his day.

It has been said of Mr. Davenport and Joe Maiden, and said with truth, that what they didn't know about hounds was not worth knowing. There are plenty of veteran sportsmen still with us who could testify, if need be, to Mr. Davenport's singular acumen and success in this department. The interregnum between Mr. Davenport and the present Master was too short to have left its mark permanently on the North Staffordshire pack, but it is only fair to say that in the Shrewsbury-Nugent reign, matters were not allowed to fall below a good average standard, and every effort was made, by judicious recourse to well-known kennels, to keep up the efficiency and reputation of the pack. When the present Master took office, it will be remembered that he was very young, and could have had no previous experience of hound-breeding, but he soon began to show great interest in, and remarkable aptitude for, hound breeding and management, and with a huntsman like Dickins, and an adviser like his brother-in-law, Mr. H. Chaplin, and other friends of similar experience, added to his own strong desire to succeed, it was no wonder that the hounds soon began to show improvement, both in quality and work, and that the name of the pack stood at least as high as ever. In this connection we cannot do better than quote from an article by "G. S. L.," which appeared in the *Field* in the spring of 1887, that is, about thirteen years after Lord Stafford had succeeded to the Mastership, a period of time which would give full scope and fair play to the kennel management of the Master and his experienced huntsman, Stephen Dickins. After some introductory and historical remarks dealing with the days of Mr. Wicksted and Mr. Davenport, and a passing reference to the short Shrewsbury-Nugent Mastership, "G. S. L." goes on to say—

"The Marquis of Stafford made very large additions to the kennel stock, and, for the matter of that, so had Lord Shrewsbury and Captain Nugent, as in their time some very large drafts had been got from Sir Watkin Wynn, and these included a good many hounds by the noted Painter, and many others that traced away from Royal. The Marquis, however, took up breeding his own hounds as soon as the groundwork he had satisfied him, and for several years no draft from any other kennel has been necessary. The encouragement given to walk puppies is much more liberal than in most quarters, for cups are given to the various counties in which the Duke of Sutherland has tenantry; and as fifty couples is about the number sent out, there are several recipients of honours. The good blood above alluded to has been evidently made the most of, as three or four years ago I paid this kennel a visit, and I thought the pack at that time belonged to a high class, but there has been improvement since, I think, in getting them more level; and for hounds of just the Belvoir height, twenty-three inches dogs and twenty-two inches bitches, it struck me, in drawing comparisons with other packs I had recently seen, that very few can beat them as a lot of little hounds with plenty of bone. This is not done in a year or two, or five or six years, as the Marquis of Stafford has reduced his standard from the hounds of Mr. Davenport's time, and, although twenty-three-inch hounds may be easily kept to that standard, they cannot be brought to it in a great hurry. The building up of a pack is a matter of time, and I should say that the North Stafford pack has arrived at a stage of very great excellence. It is now believed on all sides that little hounds are much better for the country than big ones, and, as powerfully built as these hounds are, they would about do for any country. It must be a great pleasure to the Marquis of Stafford to breed them, also on pedigree lines, as his lordship can hit back to many sorts that are not very plentiful, but still existing in many kennels; as, for instance, he could get at Sir Tatton Sykes's old Yorkshire sort, which is easily traced through a hound I have mentioned above, called Chanticleer, by going to the Grafton or the Oakley; and it seems possible that hitting to Mr. Drake's Hector line, brought in as far back as 1849, in Joe Maiden's time, was productive of some good, when that blood to be found in the kennel in 1872 was crossed into exactly the same line by a draft hound from the Fitzwilliam, called Fugleman, as the latter's son, Falstaff, entered in 1876, Dickins thinks is the best stallion hound the Marquis of Stafford has ever bred. Fugleman was by the Fitzwilliam Forester, out of their Bayleaf; and if the last-named bitch's pedigree is examined it will be found that she goes back to Hardwick, by the Drake Hector. It is in this way that foxhound-breeding has progressed so, in my opinion—namely, by the connection of old lines that have traversed through the blood of different kennels. However, to my task now of showing what the North Stafford are to-day, after a pretty direct line of breeding for forty-two years.

"I must mention that Mr. Davenport, at the invitation of the Duke of Sutherland, removed his hounds from Wolstanton, some little time before he died, to Trentham, which is much more conveniently situated, the former place being almost outside the country. The kennels at Trentham had been originally built to accommodate the sporting dogs of a late duke, and, with some additions and extra yards, they made as perfect foxhound kennels as can be found for their size, the buildings being in the old-fashioned substantial style, and of an architecture to tally with other ornamental structures on the domain. My visit this week happened on a beautiful day, and it was indeed a very enjoyable morning with Dickins and his popular whip, Will Boxall, who on one occasion very nearly won the Liverpool Steeplechase. As usual, I expressed a wish to see last year's entry, and the first couple drawn were the brothers Castor and Capital, by Racer out of Charity, the former being the best, but both so far beaten by several of their comrades that followed as to preclude much chance of their being sires of the future. The next lot of brothers, a trio by Newsman, a son of the Oakley Newsman, I liked much better; and one of them, named Grumbler, was the cup puppy of the lot walked in Yorkshire. He is a grand little hound, very level, full of bone, and quite a typical twenty-three-inch hound, his brothers, Gamester and Grappler, being fairly good also, and all are clippers in their work, so that Grumbler is likely to be used early. Their pedigree is quite of the oldest kennel strain, as their dam Guilty was by Falstaff, Dickins's crack sire above named, and she was out of Governess, whose dam was Gaiety, a daughter of Valiant, who, as I have traced above, went back to the Cheshire Bangor. A handsome couple of hounds of the dark Belvoir tan are Hamblin and Hercules, by Harbinger, out of Garland; and here again the old source of which Joe Maiden was so proud is gone back to, as Harbinger was by the Brocklesby Alfred, by their Ambrose, son of Belvoir Senator; and Harbinger's dam was Hasty, by Lord Hill's Dexter out of Harmony, a daughter of Bracelet, by Bedford, and thus down to the Cheshire

Bangor. Nabob, by Newsman, I like very much, and through his dam, Faithful, he goes back into old kennel sorts in somewhat the same way as the others; whilst if Saffron, by the Belvoir Stainless, out of Vivid, by Valiant, cannot boast of quite as much quality as his well-known and popular sire, he has, at any rate, plenty of bone, and stands on the best of legs and feet; he will be used both on account of his great goodness as a workman and on account of his exceptional pedigree, which can be traced by looking into the text of this report. This made up last year's dog entry, and I concluded that there are three or four stallion hounds amongst them, and the blood of all the lot goes back to the Cheshire Bangor, who was a performer in that great hunt somewhere between 1840 and 1850.

"The bitch entry was supposed to be rather better than the dogs, and it was much stronger also in point of numbers, as, out of the fourteen couples of puppies put on, nine and a half couples were contributions to the bitch pack. Bonnylass, by Warrior, out of Baneful, was a single puppy, but she is very neat, and so are the sisters Glorious and Graceful, of the Newsman and Guilty litter; but almost the pride of the whole entry is a litter of three couple, of sisters, all put on—namely, Loyalty, Lawless, Legacy, Lavish, Ladybird, and Laundress, by the North Cheshire Linkboy, a son of the Meynell Linkboy, by their Manager, whose pedigree can be traced for a hundred years; and the dam of these sisters is Harriet, still in the kennel, and by the Atherstone Solon, out of Handmaid, by Mr. Hill's Dexter, out of Harmony, a daughter of Bracelet, as I have stated above. There is material enough in this litter to breed a pack of hounds from, as they are all good-looking, Legacy and Lawless being first and second cup puppies, and both are beautiful Belvoir tans, whilst in their work, Dickins says, nothing can be smarter, Lawless, he should almost think, being the fastest bitch in the pack. There is another bitch in the entry that might equal these in good looks—namely, Spinster, sister to Saffron, the Belvoir Stainless dog that I have noticed, this bitch being all Belvoir in quality, and I was glad to hear the good opinion entertained by Dickins of the son and daughter of Stainless as performers in the field. There are three very sharp-looking sisters by Warrior, out of Magic, namely, Worthy, Welcome, and Witchcraft, and well-bred ladies these are, as Warrior was out of Bonnybell, a descendant in very direct line from the Cheshire Bangor, with some notable blood thrown in besides, as the sire of Warrior was Whynot, a son of the Fitzhardinge Wonder. I admired these young bitches very much when seen together, and I thought they added very much to the beauty of the whole bitch pack; and a good entry always does do this, as there is a freshness about young bitches in their first season that is likely enough to give a smartness to the whole. The Marquis of Stafford's bitch pack, though, is a treat for any lover of hounds to look at, as they are very level, a trifle bigger in proportion to what the dogs are, being, I should say, good twenty-two inches, so about the same as the present Belvoir bitch pack, that is a little bit bigger in standard than it used to be, and also the Grafton. To select a few for good looks, there is Diligent, by Gallant, out of Dimple, and Favourite, a badger pied, and also a daughter of Gallant's; Alpha, a grand, long, low bitch, by Bondsman, out of Adelaide; and Spangle and Sportley, sisters of a very good class, by Bondsman, out of Starlight; not forgetting Daisy, one of the best-shaped ones in the whole pack, and she is by the Bramham Moor Gambler, out of Dimple, by Mr. Chaplin's old favourite, Druid.

"Coming to the stallion hounds, I am reminded that the sires in great favour with the Marquis of Stafford have been the Blankney. He used Druid a great deal, and also Sportsman, Rifleman, Woldsman, Gamester, Guider, and Champion.

When I looked over the Blankney I thought Druid was the best-looking stallion hound in the pack, and a very fine-bred hound he was, by Damper, son of the Burton Dorimont, out of Lavender, by Larkspur, son of Lord Henry Bentinck's Comrade. Druid must have done the pack under notice some good, as he had a capital litter of two and half couples, all put on in 1879, and they remained in orders some time, and were bred from; and two bitches called Darling and Prudence, belonging to other litters, were also by Druid. A blood-like, third-season hound called Bender is of the family, as he is by Bondsman, son of Falstaff, already alluded to, and his dam was Daffodil, by Druid. Vanguard, a good-shaped-hound, and a very good one, has been used a good deal, and he is by the Meynell Baronet, out of Vestal, by Grecian, a Fitzwilliam and Belvoir bred hound. Comus has been another useful sire, and, bar his colour, there is much to like about him, and his pedigree would do for most breeders, by the Bramham Chanticleer, out of Gadfly, by Alfred, out of Gaiety, a bitch I have mentioned as going back to the Cheshire Bangor. There are a good many in the kennel now by Comus, and Vanguard's line looks rather the stronger of the two at present, as there is a son of his called Villager, now in his second season, and, bar that he is a trifle short in his shoulders, like the old dog, he is a stallion hound all over, and such a good one, down a road or anywhere, and he can drive besides. He will therefore be used freely, and it is rare blood on his dam's side also, as Sprightly was by the Fitzwilliam Statesman. I think it is to the second-season hunters that the most attention might be paid as regards stallion hounds, as there is Trojan, a very straight, level hound, with immense bone for his size, and quite a *multum in parvo.* He is as good as he looks, and appears to be Dickins's prime favourite, though he has always been a prominent young gentleman, being the prize puppy of his year. He is by the Brocklesby Tapster, out of Willing, by the Blankney Woldsman, her dam Gladsome, by Benedict, and going back to the oldest sorts I have alluded to. Gameboy, by Manful, son of Dexter, by Lord Hill's Dashwood, is a long, low hound belonging to a very good sort, and I was much taken with Wellington, another two-year-old, by Warrior, son of Whynot, son of the Fitzhardinge Wonder, the dam of Wellington Passion, by Primate, out of Mr. Chaplin's Dewdrop, by Druid.

"I saw quite enough of the North Staffordshire kennels to convince me that it is a good pack of hounds, that has been coming on in excellence during very recent years, and, as a pack of the future, it may be of great use to breeders in containing blood that, in the many changes constantly taking place in countries, has got somewhat scarce, and may get still more so. The Marquis of Stafford may be ranked with Lord Portsmouth in having got perhaps the cream of the Blankney in the hey-day time of that pack, and there is some fine old Cheshire blood, some of the best of the Meynell, and no bad share of the Fitzwilliam. Its progress is likely to continue, as the noble master is very popular and the country seems proud of the pack. As is well known, the Marquis has been absent this winter, but his deputy, Mr. Fitzherbert Brockholes, has been most assiduous in his duties as Master, and the kind way in which he has conducted the affairs of the Hunt has gained him the good-will of the whole country."

Our readers would probably find it tedious if we were to supplement "G. S. L.'s" account of the pack in 1887 by giving an equally detailed account of the various changes and experiments in hound-breeding from 1887 to the present date. We find, on reference to the Hound Lists, that Oakley Newsman continued for some years to be a favourite sire, and that the Cheshire, the Meynell, the Belvoir, and the Atherstone kennels were all resorted to for breeding purposes. In more recent and modern times the Badminton, the Quorn, the Brocklesby, Lord Fitzhardinge's, the Warwickshire, the Cheshire, and a number of other well-known kennels, have been visited, and without wearying our readers with detail, we may safely say that the North Staffordshire pack, both for appearance and work, will hold its own well with any pack of hounds in the country. The dog pack still averages about twenty-three inches, the bitch pack about twenty-two inches, and the average number of hounds kept is about fifty-eight to sixty couple. For those who are really interested in hound lore, and wish to study the pedigree question, we propose to print the Hound Lists from the year 1887 to the year 1902 in an appendix, and to this appendix we refer the connoisseur.

While on the subject of the hounds, we may take this opportunity of referring to a very popular, and in our judgment a very successful institution which the Duke of Sutherland was one of the first Masters to introduce—the annual Puppy Judging Show and Luncheon. This show and luncheon fixture began in the early days of Lord Stafford's Mastership, and was carried on upon the usual lines of such institutions—a show of the puppies, prizes to the successful walkers, and the hospitable luncheon afterwards to the members of the Hunt and the tenant farmers and others. But shortly after Lord Stafford's accession to the dukedom, the institution grew into an affair of much greater importance, and an agricultural show of stock and produce, the property of tenant farmers in the country of the North Staffordshire Hunt, was added, with substantial prizes, provided in the main by the Duke, but supplemented by gifts from various members of the Hunt. The show is generally held in July, in the beautiful park at Trentham, near the kennels, the luncheon taking place in a large marquee in the courtyard belonging to the Hall. It is scarcely necessary to say that this is a red-letter day, and a most popular function, for all parties concerned, more especially for the farmers in the district. Nothing can be more graceful than the hospitality shown by the Duke and Duchess on these occasions, and we feel sure that this annual event does much to popularize fox-hunting amongst the tenant farmers of the district.

We print below a report of the proceedings at the show and luncheon of 1899, from the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, taking this as a typical specimen of this pleasant annual function:—

## THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT.

### THE AGRICULTURAL AND PUPPY SHOWS.

For some six years now it has been the custom, on the occasion of the judging of the new entry of hounds of the North Staffordshire pack at Trentham, with its annual award of prizes and puppy-walkers' luncheon, to hold a show of stock and produce, the property of tenant-farmers of the Hunt. So thoroughly has this been supported by his Grace the Duke of Sutherland and the Duchess and by the members of the Hunt, that the annual agricultural show held on the puppy-judging day has become a fixture that vies in extent and excellence with societies that can boast a county name. The seventh annual gathering was held in the Park on Tuesday, in beautiful weather, the Duke and Duchess and a large party being present at the proceedings. The attendance was large, the show was the largest ever held, and at the kennels Boxall had a large entry to place before the judges, the manner in which he brought them out being a credit to him. During the morning, and subsequently at the luncheon, the band of the Staffordshire Yeomanry discoursed sweet music, under the leadership of Mr. John Gladman, and their performances were quite a musical treat.

The entry of young hounds comprised 15½ couples of dog hounds, 9 couples of bitch hounds, in all 24½ couples. The judges were the Earl of Lonsdale and the following huntsmen: Dale of the Duke of Beaufort's, Tom Smith of the Bramham Moor, and Capel of the Belvoir. The following were their awards:—Dog hounds—1st, Chimer, sire Warbler, dam Constance, walked by Mr. Noden, of Seabridge; 2nd, Harbinger, sire The Quorn Hardwick, dam Placid, walked by Mr. Pedley, Moddershall; 3rd, Warwick, sire Warwickshire Warlock, dam Wakeful, walked by Mr. Basset, Strongford Bridge. Bitch hounds — 1st, Nourish, sire Babington Nelson, dam Honesty, walked by Mr. Foster, Trent Vale; 2nd, Norah, same litter, walked by Mr. Huntbach, Buerton; 3rd, Parody, sire Ganymede, dam Passion, walked by Mr. Wilkinson, Madeley. There would have been a stronger entry of bitches, but a good many have been lost by distemper. The entry of dog hounds was a very good one. Chimer is a beautifully-shaped dog, but showed himself badly, being very shy in the kennel. He has good legs and feet and nice bone, but, being a grey, his colour is a bit against him. Harbinger is a very well-topped dog of a useful type, but not so good on his legs and feet as the first. Warwick is a useful working sort of dog. Of the bitches, the first prize, Nourish, is full of quality, and should make her mark; Norah is not quite so correct about her legs and feet; and the third, Parody, is a big, powerful bitch that looks like making a useful matron in future. The judges were much pleased with what they saw at the kennels.

The judging of the stock began in the Home Park at about 10 a.m. The prize list of the agricultural show has grown year after year, and this itself is a matter for cordial satisfaction, because the exhibitors must be tenant-farmers (or owners of not more than fifty acres) farming in the limits of the Hunt. The prizes are given by the noble Master and the gentlemen of the Hunt, and Rule 12 provides that "any exhibitor having strands of wire in fences on his farm, who refuses to let the same be removed during the hunting season at the expense of the Hunt, will be disqualified." This question of wire, as will be seen below, was much impressed upon the farmers at luncheon, and his Grace is desirous that tenants should be fairly treated in this matter by landlords, and that the old natural fences should be kept up, affording, as they do, both a fence and a shelter. We believe his Grace is willing to supply posts and rails to farmers to protect their young fences and fences that have been newly laid and are not quite safe. His Grace expressed a wish to the writer of this report that all landlords would see that their fences were in order for the in-coming tenant, and the use of wire would then be obviated. Turning to the show itself, it has reached dimensions now that place it on a level with much more pretentious collections. The Duke is president, and the vice-presidents include the Earl of Crewe, Sir D. L. Broughton, Messrs. B. T. Fitzherbert, J. W. Philips, H. Ker Colville, and R. Sneyd. There is a committee representative of the Hunt and an executive committee of farmers, whilst Mr. J. Meadows is an efficient if not too accessible secretary. The growth of the show will be apparent from the accompanying table of entries since its inception :—

| | 1893. | 1894. | 1895. | 1896. | 1897. | 1898. | 1899. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hunters | 32 | 43 | 46 | 51 | 74 | 48 | 60 |
| Hackneys | | | | | | 27 | 30 |
| Heavy horses | 36 | 35 | 50 | 33 | 42 | 41 | 66 |
| Cattle | — | — | 34 | 41 | 64 | 53 | 64 |
| Sheep | — | — | 29 | 18 | 18 | 20 | 17 |
| | 68 | 78 | 159 | 143 | 198 | 189 | 237 |

In addition to these, there has been, since 1896, an average entry of about eighty of cheese, butter, eggs, dressed poultry, and honey.

Then follows a list of entries and awards, which we omit as only of temporary interest.

The annual Hunt luncheon was held in a large marquee in the courtyard at one o'clock, where some three hundred sat down, and several had to wait for a second table. The Duke presided, and, as usual, the several Hunt trophies were displayed, the silver fox presented to his Grace by the Hunt on his marriage being in front of him, and the various other Hunt presents being on a table in the centre of the marquee, together with the handsome prizes to be awarded to the successful "nurses" of puppies. The luncheon was lavishly provided and admirably catered for by Messrs. A. Bayley & Son, of Newcastle, to whom much credit is due for the way in which it was managed. The Yeomanry band was stationed in the coach-house hard by, and played during luncheon and also most appropriate tunes after the various toasts. His Grace was supported by Lady Gerard, the Earl of Lonsdale, the Duchess, Miss Chaplin, Mr. and Mrs. Charrington, Mr. and Mrs. R. Fort, Mr. J. W. Philips, Colonel Rhodes, Sir M. E. M. Buller, Sir G. Chetwode, Mr. A. W. Radford Norcop, Mr. W. W. Dobson, Mr. F. J. Harrison, Major Stamer, and Mr. R. N. Wood, others present including Mr. Eric Chaplin, Mr. K. H. Hargreaves, Mr. E. J. W. Wood, Mr. F. Vaughan Williams, Mr. N. A. Coghill, Mr. W. E. Stamer, Mr. E. A. Ridgway, Mr. R. P. Copeland, the Rev. E. V. Pigott, the Rev. E. Salt, the Rev. P. E. Mainwaring, Major G. Harding, Mr. T. W. Twyford, Messrs. W. R. Kirkham, Murphy, A. W. Leedam, C. E. Challinor, Wheatley, McCracken, C. J. Blagg, A. Edwards (Mayor of Longton), P. H. Rawson, J. E. Knight, Menzies, J. Meadows, P. Marsden, F. G. Mather, W. E. Bowers, W. D. Phillipps, Hinchcliffe, C. R. A. Birch, J. S. Norris, Alex. Simpson, and a thoroughly representative gathering of farmers.

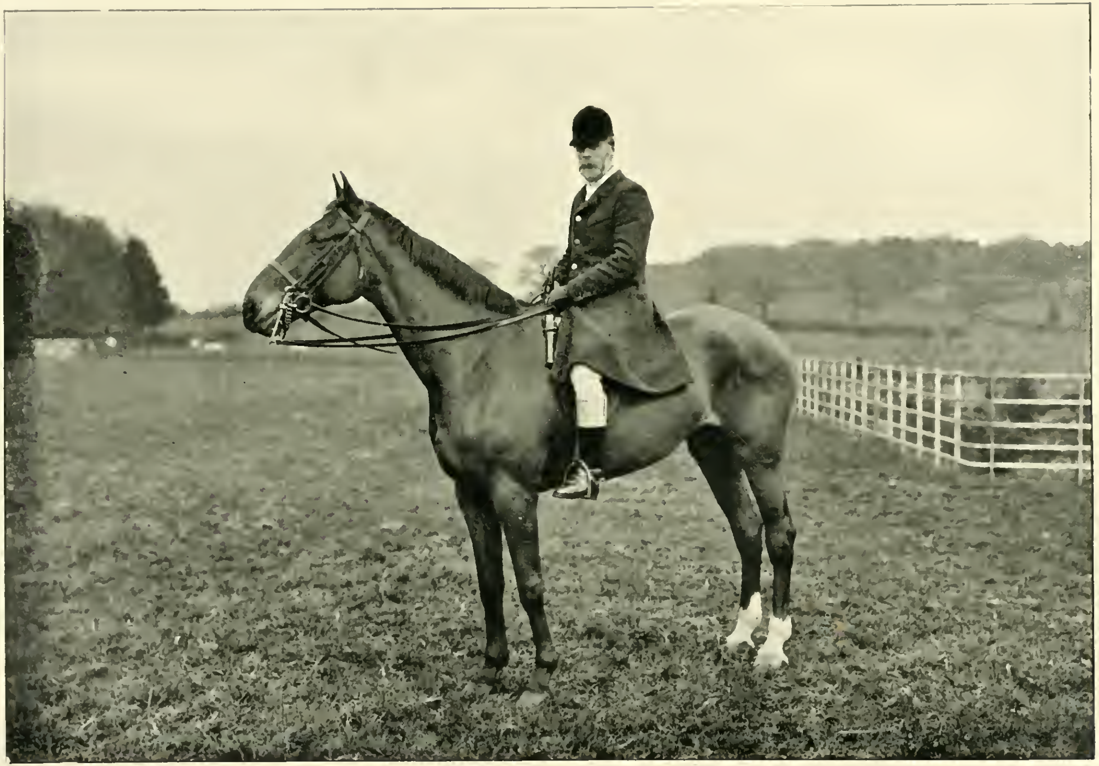
After the Duke had proposed the loyal toasts, and they had been loyally honoured, his Grace proposed the health of the successful competitors, both puppy-walkers and those in the agricultural show. A pack of hounds was entirely dependent upon the way in which the puppies were walked, and all hunting men always felt extremely grateful to those farmers and their wives who walked puppies for them without tying them up, and then brought them to the kennels in proper condition.

The Duke then read the list of the chief awards.

Messrs. E. Noden and W. F. Wilkinson replied as puppy-walkers, and Mr. R. S. Wilkinson, as a winner at the agricultural show, said every one would acknowledge that as far as cattle went there had never been a better show. It took something very good now to win at Trentham, and the next day at Wolverhampton they would find nothing much better. The only hope for the agriculturist was to put his shoulder to the wheel and look after his stock, and if that failed him, God help him.

Mr. John Bourne also replied, and said it was much easier to win a first prize at Trentham three years ago than it was now to win a third. He was glad to note that several who were unsuccessful a few years ago had now come to the front. He should like to see those farmers in the hunting-field, and then there would be less wire, but if some of them were too old, then they should send their sons.

The Earl of Lonsdale next proposed "The Health of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland." (Applause.) He was perfectly certain that there could be no greater pleasure to any of them than to drink the toast which he had submitted. It would be impossible for him to commence dilating upon their Graces' respective good qualities. Were he to do so he should have to detain them all until the next day, and he thought they might be wanted at home. (Laughter.) He therefore only asked them to drink the toast. Having been invited, however, to judge the hounds together with his huntsmen colleagues, he might just say a word or two with regard to hunting. Though he was not just now a Master, he had had his pleasure and experience of the chase in several countries, and as a Master of Hounds for twenty-five years he might fairly claim to rank amongst those whose heart and soul were in the sport. He had always found that amongst the agricultural classes the greatest facilities were afforded to hunting. He had never yet met a man who was a really good agriculturist who was not pleased to see the hounds. (Applause.) He might be caused annoyance at the moment, and difficulties might arise which caused him annoyance, and very often the



THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND, M.F.H.

*From a photo by Whitlock, Birmingham.*

better the farmer the more strict he was about his fences and the more annoyed he might be on a wet day to see them ride over his seeds. He was sure, however, that the good feeling which had existed in the various countries in which he had hunted must exist here, and that there was not a soul who would not welcome his Grace and the hounds. A most important part as regarded hunting was the early infancy of puppies. He had noticed that day—and he was sure his Grace would excuse him saying so—that there were several puppies that would have been considerably improved had they had their liberty. He was an absolute stranger, therefore he did not refer to any individual, but he noticed that there were hounds that had been kept up. He believed his huntsmen colleagues would be inclined to put it more strongly and say that two beautiful animals had been ruined for want of exercise. He was sure that was not the intention of those who walked the animals. The only way to rear a foxhound puppy was to give it its freedom, keep it dry at night, and not give it too much food. Those were the three principal things that he would ask them as puppy-walkers to bear in mind. He thought the entry was a fair one, but he did not think it was as good as the animals might be made. It was on occasions like that that agriculture and fox-hunting met together more noticeably than at any other time, and he should like to ask those who were interested in the chase—the chase that had existed in this country so long and brought all classes together, that made friends of kings and peasants and intimacy among every conceivable class—to do their best to maintain hunting. The one thing that might stop hunting eventually was the use of barbed wire. It would not only stop fox-hunting, but if they would take the trouble to read of the injuries caused by it they would find that it would considerably increase the rate of insurance, because injuries to animals were now fifteen per cent. more than they used to be fifteen years ago. If they were to be tempted by the cheapness of barbed wire as a fence, there would soon be no such thing as an English thorn fence at all. The use of it was simply a means of avoiding the proper repair of their fences. On his own land he was always willing to keep the fences good—(applause)—and he had himself a very strong feeling that fencing and ditching were matters for the landlord. He appeared to be at variance with his noble host on this point, but he thought if this were done it would save a good deal of the use of barbed wire. He asked them to drink the toast of " The Duke and Duchess," whom they all respected as man and woman. They wished them every possible happiness, and God bless them. (Applause.) The toast was drunk with musical honours and cheers.

The Duke, in replying, said he need hardly explain the reason of their meeting there, that gathering having been held for so many years. It was fox-hunting that caused them to meet, and if hunting came to an end they would no longer meet there. They had many ways of amusing themselves in this climate in the winter months—golf, hockey, hunting. But hunting was a great industry, as well as an amusement. An enormous amount of money was spent in hunting. As a gentleman told them at Peterborough, there were two hundred and twenty-one packs of hounds—one hundred and eighty in England, twenty-six in Scotland, and fifteen in Ireland, with 80,000 couples of hounds, with 100,000 horses worth £7,000,000, and involving a cost of £5,000,000 per annum for their keep. The cost of the hounds was not mentioned, and there were a great many other expenses entailed by hunting. With regard to wire, his Grace would only say that he thought that any landowner who looked over his estate and saw old fences dying away should use every effort he could to keep those fences alive. He did not mention any locality, but he did know estates where the fences were dying out and where soon nothing would be left but barbed wire. This was a question quite apart from hunting altogether—the dying-out of the old natural fences. It was a thing he would not suffer on his own estate, because the natural fences were valuable also as shelter for stock, and he thought it the landlord's duty to see that they did not die out, and if the landlords did their duty the tenants would do theirs. In their country they had been working away quietly for the last four or five years. They heard many people say fox-hunters should pay for their hunting. He could only say that they were paying. The Hunt spent £500 a year on the renewal of the fences in their country, and they were doing everything they could in that direction. So far the results were very good, and he only hoped that they might be able to hunt the country in its integrity for many years to come. (Applause.)

Mr. C. J. Blagg proposed the health of the judges. He said two things prevented him hunting now—these were Anno Domini and barbed wire. He endorsed the previous speaker's remarks. He believed it would be a bad day for farmers if hunting ceased. In the words of the immortal Mr. Jorrocks, "'Unting is the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only twenty-five per cent. of its danger." If Mr. Jorrocks had lived in the days of barbed wire he would have been inclined to put the danger at fifty per cent. He hoped by co-operation between landlord, tenant, and fox-hunter, they would be able to do away with this pest of a hunting country.

Mr. J. W. Philips, Mr. R. Fort (Master of the Meynell), and the three huntsmen replied, the latter endorsing the Earl of Lonsdale's remarks as to the rearing of puppies.

Mr. Radford-Norcop proposed the health of the farmers of the North Staffordshire Hunt. In doing so, he said the farmers must have perseverance for their elder brother, experience for their bosom friend, caution for their wise counsellor, and hope for their guardian angel. In other words, the farmer had to trust and to wait. He was pleased that, though the season could make no pretence to the phenomenal result of last year, it would certainly not be a bad one.

Mr. Wm. Coomer replied, and said if all packs were managed like the North Staffordshire there would not be so much grumbling in the country.

Mr. R. S. Wilkinson, in reply, said hunting did as much for agriculture as anything in the country. Their noble Master did all he could to help the farmers, and the speaker only wished that all others managed the Hunt as well as it was managed at Trentham.

This concluded the speeches, and the Duke announced that the gardens were open to the visitors. The company then adjourned to the showyard to witness the trials of hunters over hurdles.

The Duke and Duchess are generally favoured with "Queen's" weather for this annual fête, and there can be no doubt of the great success of the institution, and of its popularity with the farmers of the district. Long may it flourish, and may the good feeling between the tenant farmers and the Hunt grow and increase year by year.

While we are on the subject of agricultural shows and tenant farmers, we are reminded of a clever satire on the old-fashioned habits and customs of our North Staffordshire farmers which prevailed some fifty years ago or more. The *jeu d'esprit*, which we hope our readers will pardon us for printing here, was written some fifty or sixty years ago by a well-known North Staffordshire landowner, the late Mr. T. Sneyd-Kynnersley, with the idea of its being sung at agricultural show dinners in the county. The present writer has often heard it sung on such occasions, but it has not, to our knowledge, appeared in print, except long ago in a local paper, and as it appears to us to be worthy of something like a permanent place, we offer no further apology for printing it here. We need scarcely point out that since this song was written North Staffordshire farmers have advanced with the rest of the world, and are now up to date with the best of them, so that the poem, amusing as we think it is, can have little or no application to the present race of Staffordshire agriculturists. The song is entitled "The Old Wooden Plough," and is written in the North Staffordshire dialect.

"Up by th' Blakemere o' Morridge, not a long time ago,
There lived an old chap wi' an old wig o' tow,
His name wor Tom Morris, and I'll tell ye how
He made a discourse on an old wooden plough.
Gee ho, Dobbin; gee ho, Dobbin;
Gee ho, Dobbin; gee up and gee wo.

"'Twor the tenth of October, and th' oats wor just ripe;
On the settle he sot, and he smoked his long pipe,
And he thought a long time about this thing and that,
And said, 'Tommy, sit down, and I'll tell thee what's what.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'These are terrible times, lad; I prithee draw nigh,
And I'll gi'e thee a wrinkle or two ere I die.
I can't stand it much longer—it shortens my breath;
These new-fangled notions will soon be my death.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'They're going too fast, lad, I tell thee, a deal.
There's Lord Talbot o' Ingestre, and Ralph Sneyd of Keele,
And Sandon and Buller, and Mainwaring and Bill—
Lord! the stuff they've been talking, it makes me quite ill.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'Wi' their bones and their acids, their drills and gu hanner;
Thy grandfeyther, Tom, niver farmed i' that manner.
He'd ha' stared hard enough if he'd heard what they say
About boiling o' oilcakes and chopping o' hay.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'Then soughing, a thing as, in course, they mun alter,
So they go a mon's depth for to get at th' top water;
And they scoop out the dirt wi' a thing like a spoon,
And for tiles, they'll be using o' 'baccy pipes soon.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'Then they prate o' their carrots and mangles, and sich
(As if growing o' carrots would mak' a mon rich);
Of hoeing o' turmits and clearing o' yallows—
Stuff and nonsense—and growing o' wheat without fallows.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'Why, it makes me to laugh; without fallows indeed!
I think they mun ha' a soft place in their yed.
And what dun ye think they've been doin' just now?
Why, they've got up a laugh at an old wooden plough.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'Ay, an old wooden plough, and they say, to be sure,
As the wide-awake farmers mun use 'em no more;
They mun all be of iron, and wood there's no trade for.
Why, what do fools thinken as ash trees was made for?'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'Talk o' ploughs made o' iron. Why, the next thing they'll do,
As sure as you live, they'll be painting 'em blue.
Then they've two tits abreast, as they call it, "Gee ho;"
They may call long enough, but it niver can go.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'No; gi'e me a good wooden plough as is strong,
And a good pair o' big wheels to help it along,
And four long-tailed tits, a mon and a lad,
And a good steady pace, and it shanna be bad.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc.

"'Then, Tommy my lad, niver heed what they say,
But get thee on still i' thy feyther's old way;
They'll bring all their hogs to fine markets just now,
But stick while thee lives to the old wooden plough.'
Gee ho, Dobbin, etc."

# CHAPTER IX.

## GOOD RUN FROM SHALLOWFORD GORSE—GRAND SPORT IN THE EARLY EIGHTIES—HISTORIC RUN IN MARCH, 1882, FROM BRINDLEY'S WOOD, ENDING WITH A KILL NEAR YOXALL, IN THE MEYNELL COUNTRY.

THE season of 1881–82 was a good one for sport, and less interfered with by frost than several of its predecessors. The following is from the *Field*, November 26th, 1881 :—

"*November* 18*th*. *Norton Bridge*.—If a 'cloudy sky' be one of the requisites for a hunting morning, high did the hearts of ardent fox-hunters beat on Friday. Perhaps the air was rather cold and the fog was hanging about a little; but the crisp look of the ground, just tinged with frost, made 'old hands' hug themselves with delight in anticipation of the good scent that would surely follow, and which, by-the-by, did not for once play them false. The hospitality of a certain well-known fox-hunter having been proved, we trot off to Shallowford Gorse—a name at which the followers of Diana bow the knee and worship. We try the powers of our steeds up the fields to the covert in a sharp canter; but even before us are those well-known forms of men and boys on foot, who, although they cannot expect to see anything but the very beginning of the sport, gallantly come miles to the meet, and follow with a dogged perseverance only known to Englishmen. What a peculiar power fox-hunting has over us, to be sure! The other day I saw a carter, whom at first sight you would have put down as a sturdy, phlegmatic soul, and who would probably have replied, had you asked him the way, that he didn't know, though no doubt he had trodden it for the last twenty years. Well, this man was quietly going along the road, when suddenly he discovered that the hounds were near. Instantly he rushed to the gate, leaving his horse and cart in the middle of the road, stood on the rails till he saw the fox, then set up the most hideous yell, tumbled over the gate head first, and rushed after the receding animal at full speed, leaving his quadruped to the mercy of fate. But to return to Shallowford, where we left our noble army. Not long have we to wait, though. Scarcely have the hounds got in, ere the welcome cry proclaims that the individual we seek has kindly consented to make an appearance. A yell, a cry to the boys not to head him, a distant scream, and we know we are right, that he is safely away, and we may give our excited steeds the run and go. Ay, go! and go we do up to the Pirehill Lane, where we stay about two minutes to hear the welcome chorus once more taken up, and swelling in the most delightful crescendo. Is he going to Yarlet? Yes. No. Away to the left seems to be his aim, and once more we stream gaily along to the Black Plantation, which in its stickiness and heaviness causes us to lament that foxes love a wood so dearly. We are too close on him for much time to be allowed for his highness to take a breathing space; in fact, we just rattle through the wood, and meet friends and compatriots in the lane. Now the hounds go right merrily, and we prepare ourselves for something good, for they are pointing for Darlaston. Now the old steeplechase ground is passed with scarcely a thought, for have we not another and more lively interest in riding ourselves than in seeing others ride? The quiet old road from Eccleshall to Stone is now disturbed with the unusual 'noise and fluster;' but we do not trouble it long, as the hounds have crossed and are skimming bravely along. Oh dear! to those who know not the locality, with what a shock does the railway embankment break upon their dreams of bliss! George Stephenson, thy worthy name is not blessed! We look at each other till Dickins, the huntsman, shows us that even railways may be crossed. Many of us feel that 'this is the time for disappearing,' though we do not echo the resolve 'to take a header down below,' particularly as a boy appears on each side of the line, and the happy ones who have not crossed call out to the hapless ones who are halfway over that a train is coming. A queer side of human nature is turned towards the world in this sport. Here we tumble down the bank and scramble up the other side post haste, when, had we waited ten minutes, a gate would have been found. (But ten minutes, and hounds going sharp!) Why, after a few fields here we are at Swynnerton, running wildly on for Tittensor. On to the Common; but here our wary one, with an evident desire to save his own life, confides the secret to a friend, who kindly undertakes to carry out the little plan. At least, that is what we suppose; but who shall know the mind of a fox? At one moment the hounds have him under their very eyes; another the grapes of Tantalus have once more receded, and who can tell how far? If some scientific man would tell us how foxes suddenly become invisible, what a boon would he confer on mankind! However, our foe, new or old, danced us round Swynnerton, pretending first he was off in this direction, then in that, till at last, after a ring round, we once more find ourselves on the Common. Horses now begin to show signs of fatigue, and as the Trentham road is the right highway for most of us, we leave the hounds to decide the combat to their own satisfaction (?), and start off on our ride home.

"M. M."

Dickins's brief note of this day's sport in his diary reads as follows :—

"Met at Norton Bridge Station. Found in Shallowford Gorse. Ran up round Yarlet Hill, and away to Swynnerton, on to Tittensor Common, to the left to *Stretter* (?) Pits, and round Swynnerton and the Pilsons to Tittensor a second time; then on to Trentham Wood, to ground in main earths."

The present writer does not know what the mystic initials "M. M." stand for, but no one can doubt that the writer of the above excellent sporting sketch, and several of the others printed in this volume, belongs to the fair sex, and if it is allowable to hazard a guess at the initials, we should be inclined to think they stand for "Merry Maid." It is pretty obvious that this fair contributor to the *Field* and the *Staffordshire Advertiser* was young, and in high spirits, and thoroughly enjoyed the sport; and the present writer offers no apology for reprinting such graphic and lively accounts of the doings of our hounds. On the contrary, he feels confident that his readers will think, with him, that we owe a debt of gratitude to "M. M." and "O. T." * for having given us such cheery and pleasant accounts of sport in the North Stafford country.

From Dickins's diary :—

"*November 30th*, 1881. *Woore.*—Found in Canridden, but fox got to ground. Found a second in Three Brooks. Ran him to Buerton, on to near Audlem, to the left past Golling's Rough, over Betton, on over the Great Western Railway, and killed him near the Styche Brook. One hour and thirty minutes.

"*December 7th*, 1881. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew Bellaport; found. Ran back to Norton, to ground. Then drew Buerton Gorse; found. Ran at a fast pace, as if for Canridden, turned to left past Buerton village and Highfield Gorse, and into Golling's Rough without a check, and hunted him back to Buerton, to ground in a drumble; dead beat. Found a third fox in Canridden. Ran three rings by Bellaport, and killed in a cowshed."

The writer's diary entry of the day's sport is as follows:—

"Hunting at Norton-in-Hales. Rode Lord Stafford's Alice Grey. Good sport. Well carried. Found first fox at Bellaport. Short run to ground. Second at Buerton Gorse. Capital fast gallop to Golling's Rough, then to ground near Canridden. Third fox at Canridden; to Bellaport. Left them running to catch train."

"*December 19th*, 1881. *Cheswardine.*—Found in the covert near the Gorse. Ran to Chipnall Wood, and up to Bishop's Wood, one turn round and over to Burnt Wood, through to Broughton Birches and to Bromley, through the Three Coppices and on to Clayholders and Standon Hall. Stopped hounds at dark. Two hours and ten minutes."

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, February 25th, 1882:

"On Monday these hounds had a day's sport which deserves record. The meet was at Sandon village, and the small but select band of followers who preferred their own pack to the charms of the Meynell at Chartley were rewarded by a brilliant day. The weather was cloudy and cold, with a strong westerly wind. The first draw was Sandon Big Wood, where a likely customer was found, and went away immediately; but being soon headed, a promising start was converted into a slow hunting run by Shaw's Wood, Milwich, and Fradswell, where he was given up, after about thirty-five minutes, having got a long lead. Birchwood Park was the next draw, and in the heather a good fox was away like lightning, over some rasping fences in the open, then through Sherratt's Wood, and up wind by Garshall Green to a farm on the left of Hilderstone Hall, where, finding the wind too strong, and the pack too close on him, Reynard turned back almost on his tracks, and running down wind through Sherratt's Wood again, and Brindley's Covert, eventually got to ground in a rabbit-burrow near Dodsleigh. Time, about forty minutes, and the first half as fast as we could go, with plenty of big fences, and no crowd to stop you in your stride. After this came the great run of the day; as it was still early (about half-past one), the noble Master gave the word for Draycot Woods, and in Bromley Wood a real straight-necked old customer was off before most sportsmen knew that Dickins had begun to draw. The pack were on his line in a moment, and a very select few alone got away with them. Through Sherratt's Wood and Birchwood Park away we went at a racing pace (the scent being most extraordinary down wind and with a cold nor'-wester blowing), through Chartley Gorse, by Shaw Farm, Hand Leasow's Wood, Chartley Park, over the Stafford and Uttoxeter road, and over the Stafford and Uttoxeter Railway, to one of the Chartley coverts on the hill; then, swinging sharp to the left, he crossed the river Blythe by Blythebridge, and set his plucky old 'phiz' for Kingstone Wood. Through this we went without dwelling an instant, on to Bagot's Woods and Bagot's Park, where, getting upon foiled ground (the Meynell Hounds had been through the woods that afternoon), and upon fresh foxes, Dickins reluctantly had to give up the chase about four o'clock, and this gallant fox was left to run another day. Every horse was done to a turn, and I grieve to say that the day's sport cost the present writer the life of a favourite and gallant old hunter, which succumbed during the night from the effects of her exertions. The only individuals who saw this straight and grand run were S. Dickins, the huntsman, who went in his usual determined style, Miss Thompson, Mr. Worrall, and your humble servant. Will Boxall, the able first whip, being posted on the reverse side of Bromley Wood, had no chance of a start, and was only able to catch them at the railway beyond Chartley Park. Another sportsman and George Goddard, the second whip, also joined in at Kingstone. Let anybody take up an Ordnance map and follow the names above given, and he will see at once what a first-class run this was. Time, about one hour and twenty minutes; distance from point to point, about eleven miles.

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* See pp. 120 and 127. There can be no doubt that "M. M." and "O. T." are one and the same correspondent.

"Redcoat."

Dickins says of this day's sport—

"Found in Sandon Wood. Ran a ring and lost. Found a second on Fradswell Heath. Ran very fast to Hilderstone and round to Brindley's Wood to ground. Found another in Bromley Wood. Ran fast to Birchwood Park, on over Chartley to Kingstone Wood, through and on to Bagot's Woods, and stopped hounds. Horses beat."

The present writer is the "Redcoat" of the above newspaper account. Even at this distance of time he would rather not dwell on the loss of his favourite mare, "Gipsy Queen," above recorded. She was one of the very best, game, clever, and speedy, and her loss to her owner was more than can be told in words, for she had carried him wonderfully well for seven or eight seasons, and scarcely ever made a mistake, and although in her teens, she was still as good and capable as she had ever been. One feels, on such an occasion, inclined to echo the words of Whyte Melville—

> "Am I womanly and weak,
> If the tear was on my cheek
> For a brotherhood that death could thus divide?
> If, sickened and amazed,
> Through a woful mist I gazed
> On the place where the old horse died?"

On March 3rd, 1882, the hounds met at Seighford and had a good gallop, which is thus shortly recorded by Dickins in his diary:

> "Drew the Witches and Williams' Wood blank, but found in the Brickhill Pits. Went away as if for Stafford Castle, turned into Ranton, past the Abbey, and on to Knightley; left it on our left, and into Blakemere Pool, and on as if for Newport, and killed him. One hour and fifteen minutes. Did not draw again. *Mem.*—I got a fall. Did not get out for a week."

Stephen Dickins was a hard customer, and the fall must have been a pretty bad one to keep him away from hunting for a week. The writer remembers hearing of it, though he was not out that day. He believes it was on that day after the accident that the Master first handled the hounds in the field and helped them to kill their fox.

On March 29th of this year (1882), the dog pack had one of the best and straightest gallops they ever had—a day that deserves, and has already received, honourable mention, for it has been recorded by Mr. Randall in his excellent history of the Meynell Hunt, where he quotes an account of the run sent up by the present writer at the time to the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, over the signature "Redcoat." The meet was at the Bird-in-Hand for Draycot Woods. We had a real good sporting field out, including some of the best men from the Meynell and other neighbouring hunts, such as Lord Harrington, Lord Berkeley Paget, Colonel Chandos Pole and his bride, Captain Duncombe, W. D. Fox, W. S. Power, and Charles Leedham, the Meynell huntsman, besides our own regular followers. Draycot Woods were, for a wonder, all drawn blank, but exactly at three o'clock we found a straight-necked old dog fox in Brindley's Wood, a small but capital covert near Birchwood Park, and we soon saw we were in for a good thing, as, without the slightest attempt to linger or to twist, Reynard at once rattled off at a great pace, skirting Fradswell Heath and Birchwood Park, round by Chartley Castle, through Chartley Park, over the Stafford and Uttoxeter Railway, by Anglesey Coppice, and over a nice country to Blithfield Hall (Lord Bagot's), where the fox ran close to the doors of the mansion, and still on through the shrubberies and park for the open country beyond. Blithbury was the next point gained, a good twelve-mile point from the find, in an hour and twenty minutes, and as nearly straight as possible. Here there was a check, which enabled some of the lucky ones to get their second horses; but after a brief respite, the gallant pack hit it off again, and eventually they pulled him down somewhere near Yoxall—right in the heart of the Meynell country—after one of the grandest and straightest runs ever witnessed. The present writer, having only one horse out, and being, moreover, engaged to dine out some distance from home, had to leave at Blithbury, and, jogging home on a tired horse, in company with Colonel Reginald Buller (who long since, alas! joined the majority), remembers well how late he arrived at that dinner-party, and how kindly he was excused by his host and hostess when he told them of the day's sport, and of his having to tear himself away before the finish. As he did not persevere to the end, the writer will not presume to distribute the honours, but he may safely say that no one went much better than the two gallant Masters and their huntsmen, Dickins and Leedham, though it may be taken for granted, with such sportsmen out as Lord Harrington, Lord Berkeley Paget, Captain Duncombe, W. S. Power, W. D. Fox, and others who might be named, that neither Masters nor huntsmen had it all their own way. The run altogether lasted nearly two hours, the distance from point to point could not have been much less than fifteen miles, and as the hounds ran (it was an exceptionally straight run), perhaps between seventeen and eighteen. There was one slight check near Chartley, and a longer one at Blithbury, and, so far as the writer recollects, these were the only real checks during the whole of the run. After the first five minutes the entire gallop was in the Meynell country, the wind was in the south-west, and the fox ran down wind the whole way, and nearly the whole of the run was in the open, the fox only just skirting a few small coverts. The severity of the run was shown by the fact that Charles Leedham's horse died the next day. The pace was always good, and the scent, though not perhaps to be called a burning scent, was good enough to satisfy every one concerned, except, possibly, Reynard himself.

It is to be noted as one of the very best March gallops that most of us can remember, and but for the fact that it *was* late in March, we should never have brought our quarry to book, for daylight would have failed. Any one who will take the trouble to follow this run on the Ordnance map, noting the places above named, will see at once what an exceptionally good gallop this was. There was not the slightest reason to suppose that we changed foxes. The hounds and horses were about twenty-three miles from the kennels when the finish came, and they did not reach home till after eleven o'clock at night, all pretty well tired out. Dickins rode a favourite bay mare, Fanny, right through this run, and the Master rode a good grey horse, Shylock, throughout, not being able to get their second horses. We believe neither of these animals was good for much afterwards. We observe that Mr. Randall, in his Meynell book, quotes W. S. Power as describing this run as the best he ever saw, and we do not think there is any exaggeration in this. To sum up the special points of this fine run: we found late in the day, and were all the keener for a gallop; it was an unusually straight line over a good country; the ground rode sound and light; scent was good enough for anything, but not too good to deprive hounds of a chance of doing good work, or the field of seeing it. Most of it was in an unknown country to the North Stafford. There were just enough hard riders out to make every one ride his very best. We wound up with a kill, and some of us did not get home till nearly midnight. What more could a sportsman desire? Dickins's short account in his diary of this memorable day is very characteristic of the man, and reads as follows:—

> "*Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Draycot blank and Birchwood Park, but found in Brindley's Wood. Ran through Chartley Park into the Meynell country to Blithbury, and right away to Yoxall, and killed him. A capital run, a straight thirteen miles."

It will be noted that there is not a superfluous word here, and certainly no exaggeration of the merits of the run or of the distance traversed, and not a word about the long and weary jog home at night. The present writer's own diary entry is—

> "Hunting at Draycot Woods. Red-letter day. Found at Brindley's Covert, and had grand run, killing at Yoxall. C. J. B. left at Blithbury. Dined at Caverswall Castle. Very late."

The season ended with a moderate day's sport at Trentham on April 8th; the record for 1881–82 being seventy-six foxes killed, and twenty-nine run to ground. Hunting altogether one hundred and three days. A very fair season's sport indeed.

The season of 1882–83 was a fair average season for sport. We take the following from Dickins's diary:—

> "*November 6th*, 1882. *Woore.*—Found in Canridden. Ran to Dorrington and killed. Found a second in Admiral's Gorse. Ran a fast ring round by Golling's Rough to Canridden, through to Buerton Gorse and to Buerton village. A good day.
>
> "*November 27th*, 1882. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found a brace in Hose Wood; got away. Ran fast to Birchwood Park, and on past Chartley Gorse to Gratwich and clashed with the Meynell hounds, and lost our fox in Chartley Park. Then drew Fradswell Heath. Ran fast to Chartley, to ground in the park."

The following cheery account of a day's sport on Monday, January 15th, 1883, is from the *Field* of the following Saturday (January 20th):—

"If hunting were like shooting and the bag made the great point, what a red-letter day would Monday last be in the annals of our sport! Three foxes killed! Enough to satisfy the most sanguinary huntsman considering his dear hounds, the most revengeful farmer mourning his lost fowls, the most ambitious school-boy panting for distinction in the shape of brush or pad.

"Our meet is at Bird-in-Hand, Hilderstone, a very unpretending spot, but lately very well attended, owing to the good stout foxes the surrounding coverts have given us, both last season and this. Although the day is bright and fine, the night's rain makes us avoid the deep muddy drives in the wood; so an eagerly expectant crowd hovers outside, listening impatiently to each sound, almost dreading to hear the faint echoes of the horn, fearing to stand and yet afraid to move, for 'tis a dreadful thing to be left behind and have to rush through a wood very late and—very cross. After some anxious moments, Dickins emerges with the pack, followed by another crowd, and as our waiting has turned out so well, we look in a superior kind of manner at their muddy appearance. If this weather lasts much longer, fresh names must surely be invented for woods, brooks, and especially mud. The next wood proves better. Scarcely are the hounds in before they are off, and after an exciting chase of about ten minutes, our unlucky fox is pulled down in Brindley's Covert. After breaking him up another wood is drawn, and it too furnishes a member. This one, after about two fields, falls a victim to the eager pack. Hounds are really a little too quick to-day, we begin to think, but the weather is so lovely, warm, and summer-like, that it is a pleasure to be out, even if we in hunting phrase 'do nothing.' 'Too warm,' say the sportsmen, but still so delicious, after all the cold and rain we have had. Birchwood Park and Gorse are now tried, but the distant noise and clamour have disturbed the friend—or foe—we wish to find, and he has left home. Finally we come to Draycot Wood, stroll about halfway up the drive, hear 'Tally-ho,' and then throw strolling to the winds. Yes, there they are, the jolly pack, going grandly a field off. We are not long in following them, and as they stream along we wonder where they are going. Towards Leigh, it seems; then with a quick turn they change and go through a farmyard—we are too hurried to notice whose. Here for a moment they are puzzled, but Dickins soon hints to them a possible chance, and like the wind they take it. Round Stallington Hall we troop, straight across the road and into the Black Woods. What a comfort! About two minutes' breathing space for our poor horses. It doesn't last long, though, and truly it is a grand and stirring sight to see the pack rushing down the hill. A few fields more bring us to Rough Close, and that little square covert rather puzzles us, for which side will he take? And, oh! we can't see. However, some good angel guides us, and we get to the top of the hill just as the hounds have comfortably gone over. One or two fields show us Cocknage peering over the hill, and we begin to think of an easy place to get down, for there is rather a nasty drop of about fifteen feet somewhere about here. Perhaps at this point we do not enjoy quite so much the sight of the hounds racing across the scene some two or three fields ahead, but after a little looking, a good place is found. One by one we scramble down, and at Cocknage we soon get up to them. But here it is only just a look into the covert and out again, straight down some more fields, and under the railway leading to the Florence Colliery. Now, we ran one to ground somewhere about here last week, and most people think that the subtle one remembers it; but no. Either the place is stopped, hounds are too close, or other good reasons intervene, for Reynard pushes on, and, with the utmost effrontery, goes up the hill, passes a football crew, supposing them to be too busy to attend to him, and slips down a street in Dresden. Well, if there isn't a noise now! John Gilpin never made such an excitement as this fox. After running down a street or two, which must have been very trying to his feelings, he darts up an entry. Hounds and Dickins soon follow, and after a minute a triumphant 'Who-whoop!' proclaims the victory. Well, the good folks of Dresden seem to enjoy it, and to sympathize with us; and though some of us do wish that so gallant a fox could live to run another day, we feel that our gallant hounds too deserve their well-earned prey, so we smother our feelings and rejoice. Then Dickins and his staunch pack trot off to Cocknage to pick up stragglers, and we trot home.

"O. T."

This is what Dickins says of the day's sport in his diary:

"*Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Draycot Gorse. Ran fast to Sherratt's Wood, and killed. Found a second in the park. Ran a ring and killed him. Drew Birchwood Park blank, and back to Draycot Woods. Found in Bromley Wood. Ran by Stallington and Black Lake to Cocknage, and on to Dresden, and killed in the town."

The writer was out, and chiefly remembers the day for the remarkable finish to the third run. Dresden is a populous suburb of Longton, and in itself quite a considerable town, so that it was rather an unusual experience to find a wild Draycot fox taking refuge in the streets and alleys of such a place, and finally being run into in a *cul-de-sac* in the shape of a back yard belonging to some worthy inhabitant of the place. The writer, deviating from his usual practice, asked for and got the brush for his son, who was out as a learner and a schoolboy, and who has since taken kindly to the noble science. As "O. T." very correctly says, there was no end of excitement amongst the Dresden people at the unwonted sight of horses, hounds, and redcoats at their very doors, and no doubt there are plenty of residents there who still recollect the day.

From Dickins's diary:

"*January 17th,* 1883. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew the osiers at Betton, and chopped a fox. Found another on Betton Moss. Ran a ring to Adderley, and up to Golling's Rough to ground. Found a third in Highfield Gorse, and ran rings round Adderley, Shavington, Buerton, and Bellaport for three hours, and had to stop hounds."

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, January 6th, 1883:

## THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

On the first day of the new year the meet was at Norton Bridge Station, and after refreshments had been disposed of at Shallowford House the order was for Shallowford Gorse. It was pleasing to see Mr. and Mrs. Finney, on whose farm the gorse is situated, on the hill as we passed, which shows that they take a lively interest in the sport. When you look at this covert you would wonder why it was called a gorse, there being no gorse whatever, and very little cover of any sort.* The good plan was adopted of keeping the horsemen a field from the covert while it was being drawn, which gives a fox every chance to get away. We had only to wait a minute or two before that music was heard which gives a throb of joy to the sportsman's heart, for "all their mouths were open, from the old one to the pup," and "Gone away" was heard a moment after he had broken on the far side of the covert. When we got sight of the hounds they were going breast-high a field ahead, making for Pirehill. A herd of cattle, however, caused a temporary check, but Dickins, with the assistance of the smart whip Boxall, soon got them on his line again, when they settled down in good earnest, going a killing pace towards Yarlet, crossing the Stone and Stafford road just below Yarlet Hall, and on to Enson, where, I suppose, not liking to brave the stream, he made a bend back towards Aston, where they pulled him down in the open after thirty-five minutes, very fast. The Black Planting was then drawn, but proved blank, as also did the osier bed on Mr. William Ball's farm. I wish here to pay a deserving tribute to Mr. Ball, as I hear he reared a litter of cubs on his farm, and expressed himself willing to suffer inconvenience rather than they should be removed. I was also glad to hear all the farmers in this neighbourhood are good fox-preservers. It is assuring to see farmers take an interest in the sport, as all there seem to do. We then trotted to Yeld's Rough, where another fox was found, and went away towards Chebsey; he afterwards bent his course to the left for Walton Bank, but was headed by a carter in the Stafford and Eccleshall road, and turned across the railway and river at Worston. In crossing the metals it was marvellous the pack was not cut up, as a train passed at full speed. The river here being impassable, we made the best of our way to the ford at Bridgford, where the river, being much swollen by the heavy rains, took the horses half up the saddle-flaps, with a strong current running, making it anything but agreeable. There was no help for it; but the hounds got so far ahead that we saw nothing of them for two miles, when we met them bringing their fox back. Having run him near Darlaston, the second whip, who had been sent back to bring up two couples of hounds that had divided after another fox in the first run, luckily dropped in with them. After joining them, this gallant and brave fox led us to Norton Bridge, and turning round left Shallowford Gorse to the right, crossing the North Staffordshire Railway. Here there was a check, and some secretly hoped he had a chance to give us another gallop in the future, but it was not to be. Dickins got again on his line, and ran him across Mr. Chatterton's farm to near Swynnerton, where he was killed, after struggling for life nearly two hours. This ended the best day of the season, and will be long remembered by all who were fortunate to be in the run. It was regretted that the noble Master and secretary were absent.

PINK.

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* This covert once well deserved its name, as we never saw a more impenetrable gorse than was the case some years since.—ED. *S.A.*

From the *Field*, February 3rd, 1883:

"These hounds met on Monday, January 29th, at Darlaston Hall. The rain was falling in torrents, and the outlook from the breakfast-room was most uninviting; but true sportsmen are seldom stopped except by frost. On arriving at the meet, rather wet, the hounds were already there, also the much-esteemed and respected Master. It may be excused if 'a little something warm,' kindly provided by the owner of the hall, was indulged in on such a morning as this. The weather improved, however, about this time, and ceased raining eventually, and it was well we left our covert coats behind, for every pound would tell in what was to come. Darlaston Wood was not a success—no blame to the owner, who is a good preserver; nor had we better luck at Micklow. Shallowford Gorse was then drawn; the hounds have gone through it—no sound, not even a whimper from a young one. But soon all was changed, and we see a fox spring from the covert side in the place the hounds were thrown in; he must have lain still until they got to the other end of the covert, when out he came and straight away. 'Tally-ho! Away,' soon brought Dickins with his darlings, and had them on his line. Straight for the boggy brook they go; the first misfortunes of the day began here—two or three overboard. On the pack go, heads up and sterns down, with lots of music, showing the scent was good. The knowing ones observed these things, and kept well up, but lay to a little, doing nothing unnecessary; they had their revenge. When the 'tug of war' came, as it did come, they secured the place of honour, and they went across Mr. William Ball's farm, heading towards the Black Planting, bending again to the right towards Yarlet, still to the right, to the old turnpike at Whitgreave. This was the first indication of a check, if only for a few minutes. Dickins soon put them right, and again settled down, going a racing pace to Whitgreave Wood; leaving this to his right, straight back to Shallowford. Horses began to show symptoms of distress, hounds gaining fast on us, first one, then two, three, and four fields ahead; and on they went, crossing the Norton Bridge and Stone Road, on to Mr. Darlington's farm, on across the North Stafford Railway, crossing the road from Yarnfield to Stone, straight to Darlaston Wood, and on to Tittensor Common. No dwelling, no shadow of a check, no friendly two or three minutes for the poor horses; on, on they went, crossing the road from Swynnerton to Trentham. On, on, is still the word, to Groundslow, and still on to Hanchurch Plant, through this to Harley Thorn and Swynnerton Old Park. How was it this fox did not take advantage of the place of refuge (for it is full of foxes, thanks to the owner)? If he had gone on, a fresh fox would have been sure to befriend him. He turns his head again to Hanchurch Plant, and who-whoop was the result. Time, one hour and twenty-eight minutes; distance from the two extreme points, ten miles as the crow flies; adding the distance from Shallowford to turnpike, Whitgreave, and divergences, the distance covered could not be much less than thirty miles. I cannot close without giving a deserved tribute to all the officials—Dickins, as huntsman; Boxall, first whip; and Challinor, second whip. They all did well and rode well. Boxall had two falls; we were glad to see there was no harm done, as he seemed to rather enjoy them than otherwise. There were indications of several having embraced mother earth, or rather mud, if you must judge from the coat, and several good men were missing at the 'roll-call.' No harm befell them, we hope.

"PINK."

Dickins says of this run—

"Drew Darlaston Wood; did not find. Went on to Shallowford Gorse; found. Ran a ring by Yarlet; back to the gorse, and on by Darlaston to Tittensor Common, on to Beech Cliff and Harley Thorn, through one corner of the Old Park, and into Hanchurch Hills, and killed at Knowl Wall."

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, February 17th, 1883:

"On Monday, February 12th, Jupiter Pluvius and Æolus were in the ascendant, and the few hardy sportsmen who put in an appearance at Sandon did not venture to don the pink, but covert coats and overalls were the order of the day. A fine dog fox was soon found in Sandon big wood, and away as if for Milwich, then with a turn along the brook-side for Shaw's Wood, leaving which on his right, Reynard pointed for Smallrise, where a long check occurred. But Dickins, by a judicious forward cast, picked up his line at Hardiwick Heath, and rattled him through that covert and on almost into Hilderstone village; then through Hilderstone Hall covert, and across the Garshall Green road for Bromley Wood, through which hounds stuck to their game in fine style, never dwelling a moment, but forcing him out as if for Hose Wood; then, swinging to the left, they crossed the Cresswell and Hilderstone road, and, after a few sharp turns and twists, showing how beaten was this game fox, the pack rolled him over in the open, near Saverley Green, after a real good hunting run of upwards of an hour and a half. Some of the most constant followers were conspicuous by their absence on this rough morning, but amongst the few at the meet and finish we recognized Mr. J. W. Philips and his son, Mr. Hall, Mr. Peake, Mr. C. J. Blagg, Mr. Morris, Messrs. Bland, and a few others of the right sort. We ought not to omit to mention that a young lady well known as an ardent follower of these hounds on saddle, was on this occasion following on wheels, and, by good management and knowledge of the country, contrived to turn up within three minutes of the fox being rolled over, and was very properly presented by Dickins with the brush. The run was, perhaps, scarcely sufficient in pace and straightness to satisfy a Leicestershire flyer, but for those who can appreciate good, steady, meritorious hunting on the part of hounds and huntsman, and who have some little regard for their horses in deep ground, it was a thoroughly enjoyable gallop. These hounds have had uncommonly good sport this season, and have already brought to hand thirty brace of foxes. Every one hopes that the noble Master will soon be in his place again, none the worse for his recent accident.

"REDCOAT."

Dickins's account of this run is, as usual, "short, sharp and decisive." Here it is:

"Found in Sandon Wood. Ran over to Milwich, and to the left back to Sandon and away to Hardiwick Heath, and on to Hilderstone and Draycot Woods, through Hose Wood as if for Stallington, and killed him one field from the Bear Hole. Time, one hour and thirty-five minutes. Did not draw again.

"*March 28th*, 1883. *Woore.*—Found at Canridden. Ran by Dorrington over the brook to Cow Leasows, past Loggerheads, through Burnt Wood and Park Springs to Chipnall Mill, to the left up to Bishop's Woods, and killed him in the middle of the Big Wood. Time, one hour and twenty-five minutes. Then drew Bromley; found. Ran a ring by Charnes and Broughton to Bromley, and lost."

Record for the season 1882–83, seventy-five foxes killed, forty run to ground. Hunting altogether one hundred and fourteen days.

The season of 1883–84 was a great season for sport with most hounds, and Dickins succeeded in killing the greatest number of foxes ever killed with the North Staffordshire Hounds, either before or since, up to the present date.

"*November 9th*, 1883. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in New Close Sprink. Ran by Bromley Wood and Hilderstone up to Spot and Moddershall, and killed. Time, fifty minutes. Went back to Draycot Woods. Found in Hose Wood. Ran a lot of rings, and to ground at Sharpley Heath.

"*November 19th*, 1883. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in New Close Sprink. Ran fast out to Chartley Gorse, and back by Birchwood Park and Draycot Woods, and lost in a snowstorm. Went on, drew Black Lake, refound our hunted fox. Ran him out to Grange Wood and Mear Heath, and killed him."

The writer's diary entry of this day's sport is—

"Hunting at Bird-in-Hand. Found in New Close Sprink, and away for Birchwood Park, and back *viâ* Middleton Green to New Close Sprink, and on towards Stallington, and lost near Fulford in a snowstorm, which cleared off. Fresh found our hunted fox in Black Lake, and killed him in Hill's Nursery at Mear Heath. Good sporting run. Rode Victor."

"*December 31st*, 1883. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found on Fradswell Heath. Ran a fast ring round Coton to Fradswell Drumble, and on to Chartley. Clashed with the Meynell, and killed our fox. Found again in New Close Sprink. Ran at a great pace up to Fradswell Heath, and away by Milwich up to Hardiwick Heath, and killed him. Hounds had the best of it all the way. Time, fifty-five minutes."

The writer's diary account of the day is—

"Nice hunting day. Bird-in-Hand. Good gallop to Chartley from Fradswell Heath. Met Meynell pack, and killed at park palings. Second fox at New Close Sprink. A good gallop by Sherratt's Wood and Milwich to Hardiwick Heath, and killed. Hounds slipped us by Sherratt's Wood."

The clashing with the Meynell at Chartley was the second time this had happened within about a year. On this occasion the hounds got so mixed that Charles Leedham and Dickins had to draw hound for hound at an opening in the park fence, before they could put matters straight; and we believe in the end one Meynell hound went to Trentham, and *vice versâ*.

The next account of runs from Seighford and Shallowford Gorse on January 9th, 1884 (the day after the

Infirmary Ball at Stafford) is from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of January 12th, 1884 :

"The usual meet of the North Stafford Hounds after the ball took place at Seighford Hall on Wednesday. The Hall itself is a picturesque object, but the goodly gathering of ladies on the terrace, with the scarlet coats of the gentlemen, and the fine pack of hounds (with Dickins at their head) in the foreground, added much to the pleasant scene. The usual hospitality of the host having been discussed, the Moor Covert was drawn, but, being situated on low ground, which also extends half a mile on one side, it makes a bad place to get away from with the hounds when Reynard chooses to take that line. Very soon after the pack had been put into the covert, a fox broke away over this impassable lowland, so we had to make our way as best we could. Those who preferred the fields to the road through the village found the parson's wicket nailed fast, which necessitated a nasty ditch full of water being negotiated. Here the first mishaps of the day commenced, for one or two 'did not remain,' as the distinguished foreigner said when his horse jumped a fence and he fell off. The hounds, fortunately, ran in our favour, and we soon caught them up going at a good pace. They crossed the road from Seighford to Stafford, and on to Oldford, then to Clanford, by Seighford Grange to the Four Lane Ends, when he doubled back, running through the Long Covert to Cooksland, on towards the Moor Covert, where he was found; but, leaving this to his left, he ran nearly the same line as before, but this time, instead of turning to his right, he veered to the left, and let us in for a nasty-looking brook. In such a contingency there are various ways of proceeding, there being ignominy on one side, and danger on the other, and all being in full view of each other, it makes the position anything but agreeable. Some went at the obstacle with a firm will; others attempted it, thinking it may be their last plunge ; while a third section, evidently of opinion that discretion is the better part of valour, take the back track, disappearing when least observed. Poor Reynard's struggle ended within two or three fields of this brook, being killed in the open after a smart run of forty-eight minutes. After drawing two or three more coverts, the hounds were trotted on to Shallowford Gorse. The good arrangement of keeping the field at the gate a field from the gorse was again observed, against the desire of some rather impetuous spirits, who gave vent to such exclamations as, 'We shall never hear them!' 'They will go away and we shall know nothing of it!' 'The wind is blowing the sound the other way; we had better go!' But we had not been more than two or three minutes before we saw Dickins, through an opening in the trees, raise his cap on the other side of the gorse. All is right now ; give scope to your ambition, put his head straight; sit still and let him go. They are away, and there is plenty of room for all. The hounds are all together, skimming the ground like a flock of pigeons. The road from Walton to Whitgreave is soon reached, and across the Black Planting seems his line ; but he keeps more to the right—perhaps he found the pace too hot—making a straight line for Aston village, where there was a slight check near some cottages; but Dickins made a good cast, and struck his line again. The fox made straight for the river Trent, which is here impassable, so we rode for the bridge at Aston, and found the hounds had marked their quarry to ground in the neighbourhood of the Orange Hayes, in a drain in front of the house of Mr. Ashcroft, who is a substantial English yeoman of the good old sort, and a staunch fox-preserver. The length of this run was twenty-five minutes, and the distance four miles as the crow flies. Thus ended a very satisfactory day's sport. This is the fourth time Shallowford has produced a fox already this season, and each time there has been a good run.

"PINK."

## From the *Field*, February 2nd, 1884:

"*January 25th. Sugnall.*—Friday, general superstition says, is a bad day to begin anything; but, fortunately, this belief did not spread so far as to mar the attendance of many sporting characters at Sugnall last Friday. Promptly at eleven Dickins and his pack arrive, and, after a short stay, proceed to draw the coverts adjoining the old hall. What a pretty sight we have from these hills! Copmere Pool, shining like silver, curiously interwoven with deep shades of blue; the wood bright with touches of scarlet; and all around the animated picture of horsemen. But there's a prettier sight yet, when we see an old hound throw up its head and emit joyful sounds, and soon the merry chorus is taken up. Then Boxall's scream is heard, and our scene becomes very animated, as there is a small and narrow lane to pass, and our innate greediness and wish to be first seems strongly developed. However, another scream in the opposite direction causes a diversion for a minute or two, and when we do get through and are fairly off we find the hounds some little way ahead. 'Three foxes astir!' is the general exclamation, and we feel happy that we are with the hounds and No. 1, instead of halloaing wildly at the far end of the covert with either No. 2 or 3. But there is not much time to think, for just when we have passed Croxton Windmill and are settling nicely down to work, the hounds go straight to a little pit; we pull up our panting horses, and find No. 1 has gone to ground. Of course there is a universal groan; then a hope we may find the others. So we make our way back to Sugnall; but the wary ones have escaped, and a succession of misfortunes assail us. At one wood workmen have been busy, and we go on, our hopes dying away and our spirits getting lower, as one wood after another proves empty. At last we pass Hillcot, and make towards Norton Bridge. The clouds are gathering fast, the sun disappears, an icy wind blows. We search for coats, and talk about the ride home. But there's no escaping that storm, so we settle to grimly enjoy it together, and jog on to Shallowford to the usual gate, where we all stand in anxious expectation. But what a horrible thing! After a pause we see Dickins emerging from the bottom of the wood. We all go down with very sinking hearts. Why, it can't be blank! Down comes the rain with pitiless, blinding force, and we feel utterly disheartened (the woe depicted on one man's face on finding this covert blank is indescribable). But Dickins hasn't done yet; he is carefully drawing back, determined that no fox shall escape him, and, oh, joyful sight! a little quiet animal peeps out and bobs back again. Out again, though, and we wait in breathless expectation till he is well ahead, and then express our delight; but there is no need for that, for the hounds are close on him. The horn is going right merrily, and we start well; but a perfect deluge of half-frozen stuff, neither rain nor snow, beats on our faces, and for a minute or two neither man, horse, nor hound can see anything. This gives the fox a cruel advantage, and he makes the best of it, for when the storm clears off, we find we are hunting very slowly. Still the hounds keep on, steadily fighting against cold plough and other disadvantages; now running, then working on slowly, till at last, over one long ploughed field, it seems as if they must give up. But here Dickins, with a clever cast, puts them on under a hedgerow. They pick it up, and, with merry music, gallop on. Now the pace begins. They rattle him away to Pirehill, run quickly through Black Planting, down to the high-road to Stafford, where he is headed; back again almost to the covert, as if he means to go to Shallowford again, then across the Eccleshall road, and straight to the North Stafford Railway. Here he must have run some way down the rails, for the hounds follow him, to the intense anxiety of all, for of course a train is coming. One man gallops back to stop it, and Boxall leaves his horse and runs along the line, gesticulating to the engine-driver and whipping hounds off. Fortunately, no harm is done, and when the train is past they pick up the scent, and take the fox to the Darlaston gates. He doubles back; they catch sight of him, and in another moment the record is completed.

"O. T."

This is Dickins's account of the day:

"*Sugnall.*—Found in the osiers a brace. Ran one fast up to Croxton, to ground under a 'rack.' Then drew Wincote, Hilcote, and Yeld's Rough blank, but found at Shallowford Gorse. Ran fast as if for Yarnfield, to the right to Pirehill Plantation, down to Aston, then to the left over the railway near Stone, and killed him at Darlaston.

"*February 6th*, 1884. *Moddershall Mill.*—Found in the oaks. Ran up to Spot and on to Hilderstone, to ground under a road; bolted, and ran him up to Hardiwick Heath and killed. Found a second in New Close Sprink. Ran out by the Blythe and up to Stallington Hall, on through Black Lake to Barlaston, up to Cocknage Wood, and killed him at Blurton."

The writer's diary account of this day's sport is—

"Hunting at Moddershall, found first fox at Moddershall Oaks. Ran by Hill's Nursery near Vernon's Gorse to Hilderstone village, and to ground in drain in front of the hall; bolted him, and killed him in the village. Found second fox at New Close Sprink; grand gallop by Cresswell and Stallington Hall to Black Lake, Hartwell, and Cocknage; killed near Florence and Dresden. Lost shoe, and left off at Rough Close. Well carried by Victor."

"*March 5th*, 1884. *Croxden Abbey.*—Found at once in Chipperlee. Ran as if for Woodseat to the left nearly to Alton Towers, came round to the left, ran through Lord's Coppice and over Winnoth Dale up to Hollington, and into one end of Heath House Drumble and back to Hollington, and killed a fox with no brush. Did not find again."

The writer was out, and remembers viewing this bob-tailed fox as he broke covert at Chipperlee, so it is clear we did not change foxes. This was a fair sporting gallop of an hour and twenty-five minutes, as timed by the present writer and entered in his diary.

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, March 15th, 1884:

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

This pack met on Monday at Woore, but owing to the snow which had fallen during the early hours of the morning, hunting was not deemed practicable until half-past twelve. At that hour the hounds were put into a cover opposite the Canridden, known as the Harrows, and a fox was immediately on foot. At a capital pace he made away in the direction of Buerton Windmill, but before he had gone very far he bore to the left, crossed the high-road, and, having run half a circle, went through the Canridden on to Bellaport, through Bellaport Wood. He then headed for Pipe Gate, but soon retraced his steps and went back into the Canridden, and was slowly hunted to between Hankelow and Doddington, being eventually lost near to the last-named place after a fine spin of about an hour and a quarter. The field then trotted to Admiral's Gorse, where another good fox was found. Leaving Woore to the right, Reynard crossed over the London and North-Western Railway, and then ran some four to five miles, ultimately getting on to the Maer hills, where the hounds were stopped, the afternoon being well advanced. The duration of this run was forty minutes.

The following account of a good day's sport at Doddington, on Monday, March 17th, is also from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of March 22nd :—

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

*Doddington, Monday.*—

"What a fine hunting day! 'Tis as balmy as May,
And the hounds to the village will come.
Every friend will be there, and all trouble and care
Will be left far behind them at home.
See servants and steeds on their way,
And sportsmen their scarlet display.
Let us join the glad throng that goes laughing along,
And all go a-hunting to-day."

The fields generally with this pack cannot be considered large, as the fixtures are private, but whether arising from the pleasant weather, or from the fact that at this drawing to a close of the hunting season there are always more strangers out, the field on this occasion was unusually large; there were several masters of foxhounds, including the deservedly respected and truly popular Master of these hounds. Doddington Hall is nicely situated in the midst of a well-timbered park with a nice sheet of water adjoining, on which the wildfowl, if you may judge from appearances, seem quite at home, with the red and fallow deer looking on at a distance. Altogether this seems the very place for a meet of foxhounds, and formed a pleasing and picturesque scene. The Chapel Wood was drawn first, when a fox was found and ran two or three rings, was concluded a vixen, and the hounds were ordered to Shaw Rough without success. Checkley Wood was more generous, and the fox led us through Wrinehill Woods, when the greater part of the field was left behind, the hounds having gone away on the other side, and were not seen until they had crossed the London and North-Western Railway and appeared on the opposite hill. It happened that there was a friendly bridge near known to a few, and we were soon with them, but had no sooner gained the hounds than we lost the fox, for he went to earth at Madeley Manor. Another covert was then drawn, when a fox was on foot, but he also disappeared underground. The next draw was Captain Heathcote's Gorse. Our friend of the previous Monday was there! An account of this run appeared in the *Advertiser* of Saturday. He broke on the side towards Woore, the field being on the other side. A disagreeable dingle had to be crossed, which caused some delay and excitement. He then crossed the Nantwich and Woore road straight for and through Mill Hay to Canridden, where he dwelt a few minutes, but was soon viewed away heading for College Fields; then bent to the right, leaving the Three Brooks to his left and Harrow's Wood to his right, and again Admiral's Gorse to his left, and seemed going for Woore village. Turning to the left, he re-crossed the Nantwich and Woore road; he then seemed to get on the line he ran the previous Monday, and it was at this point the tug-of-war commenced, and the hounds raced him straight to Maer Hills, and he died as all good foxes should, yielding only to the inevitable. The time was one hour and fifteen minutes. I believe all who rode to the end will confess that they and their horses had had enough. It was to be regretted that her ladyship, the wife of a Master of Foxhounds, with several others, had to leave early, and thus missed this capital run.

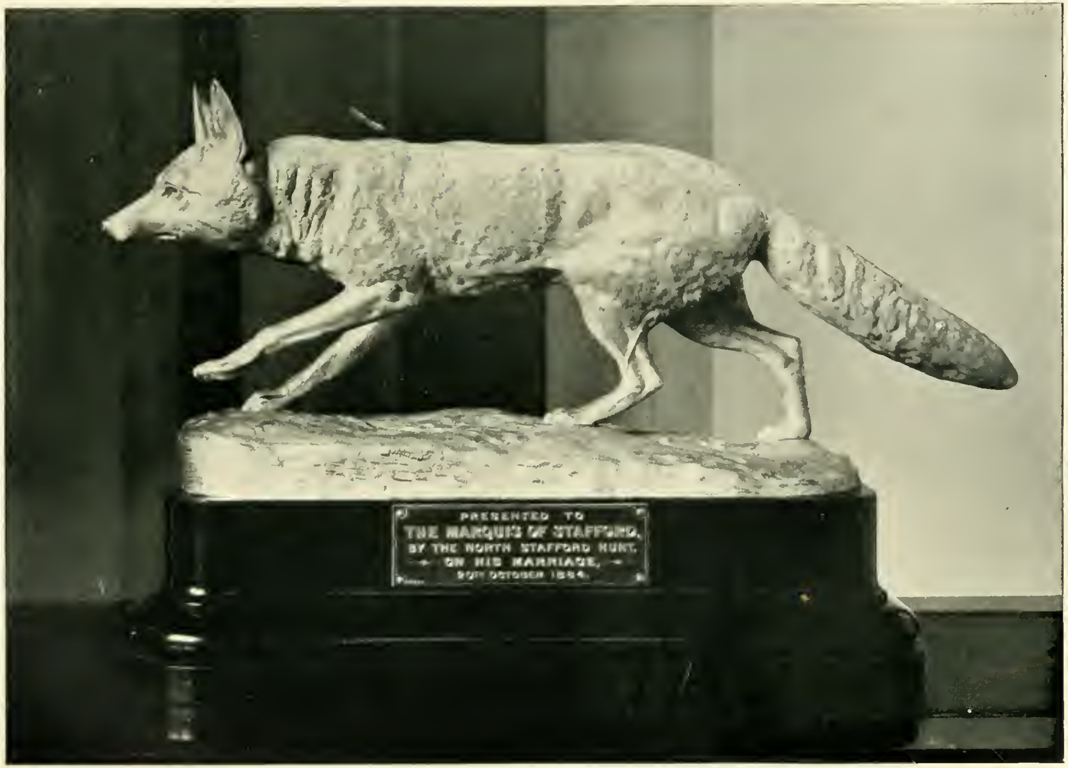
PINK.

The above account reminds us that for a season or two the Master gave up advertising the meets, but this was not continued long, as it was found inconvenient for farmers and others. This was a sanguinary and a record season for the North Staffordshire Hounds, and for Stephen Dickins, for he brought to book no less than 101 foxes, a total far in excess of anything done by this pack either before or since, and a result entirely after Dickins's heart, who was always keen to kill his fox if possible. The record shows one hundred and twenty-five days out, a hundred and one foxes killed, and thirty-five run to ground. There was very little interruption by frost.

## CHAPTER X.

MARRIAGE OF M.F.H.—WEDDING PRESENT—GOOD OPENING DAY—FATAL ACCIDENT TO CAPTAIN TYLDEN—CRESSWELL HALL MEET—SPORT IN FEBRUARY, 1886—"WARE WIRE"—HUNT COMMITTEE—OPENING DAY, 1886–87.

The season of 1884–85 was a good season for sport; but it was also a time of special interest to the members of the Hunt, for on October 20th, 1884, their popular Master was married to Lady Millicent Fanny St. Clare Erskine, daughter of the fourth Earl of Rosslyn, and, as all the North Staffordshire world knows, not only has the union been a pre-eminently happy one to the persons most concerned, but it has added a new brightness and charm to the chase in the North Staffordshire country. It was not long before we all found that there was no danger of the new influence making the Master less keen about sport. On the contrary, the young Marchioness soon showed us the way over the country, and established her fame as a skilful and fearless rider to hounds. It was not likely that the members of the Hunt would allow the happy occasion of the marriage to pass without some token of their interest in the event, and of their warm regard for the Marquis, who had shown them such excellent sport, and managed the Hunt so well for the last ten years. A committee was appointed to collect subscriptions, which came in most willingly, from the members of the Hunt, and ultimately it was decided to present a silver fox, which was modelled by the late Sir Edgar Boehm, R.A., and


PRESENTED TO
THE MARQUIS OF STAFFORD,
BY THE NORTH STAFFORD HUNT,
ON HIS MARRIAGE,
20TH OCTOBER 1884.

THE SILVER FOX.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

was made by Messrs. R. and S. Garrard & Co., of the Haymarket, and it is scarcely necessary to say they succeeded in producing a really beautiful work of art. It is used as a centrepiece for the dinner-table, and is constantly seen by the members of the Hunt on the many hospitable occasions of Hunt dinners and luncheons at Trentham. The weight of it is 192 ounces 30 drachms, and the extreme length twenty-three inches. The writer trusts that the photograph to be reproduced for this work will give a fair idea of this appropriate wedding present. On the base is an inscription in these words: "Presented to the Marquis of Stafford by the North Stafford Hunt on his marriage, October 20th, 1884."

The writer feels that it would be as presumptuous on his part as it would be superfluous to do more than briefly mention here the distinction which the present Duchess of Sutherland has won, since her marriage in 1884, in the world of literature and philanthropy, as well as in the social world. These records are "writ large," so that every one has access to them, and in a book of this description we may well assume that our readers are at least as fully informed in such matters of general knowledge as the writer can claim to be.

The following are extracts from Dickins's diary for the season of 1884–85:—

> "*November* 12*th*, 1884. *Sandon.*—Drew Orange Hayes blank, but found three or four foxes in Hardiwick Heath. Hounds divided, and we did little good. Found again in Cotwalton Drumble, top end, but did no good. Found a fox in the Osiers at Aston, and ran a fast ring by Whitgreave and Shallowford, and killed him at Pirehill. Time, thirty-five minutes."

The writer was out, and has the following brief entry in his diary:—

> "Hunting at Sandon. Rode little mare. Good run in afternoon from Aston, and killed at Pirehill. Ring by Shallowford Gorse, etc. Home late after six."
>
> "*November* 17*th*, 1884. *Woore.*—Found in Canridden, and ran a ring round Bellaport and back, round Woore to Mill Hay, then away by Finson's Hay and Checkley Wood to Wrinehill, and on over Bar Hill to the Bitterns, on up to Radwood over the railway, and up to Maer Hill to ground. Got him out and killed him.
>
> "*January* 28*th*, 1885. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found on Fradswell Heath. Ran fast

by Draycot Woods, and up to Stallington Heath, and stopped hounds. Poison put down there. Found a fox in Spot Gorse. Ran by the Bird-in-Hand and on to Fradswell, and round to Milwich village, and lost him.

"*February 9th*, 1885. *Woore.*—Found in Canridden. Ran fast to Bellaport, and killed. Found again at Bellaport, and lost him. Found a third fox at College Field Drumble—a bad fox; killed him. Found another in Harrow's Wood. Ran a ring to ground. Found again in Finson's Hay Gorse. Ran very fast right away to Maer Hills, and on to Chorlton Moss to ground; bolted and killed him. *Three foxes in the earth.*

"*February 14th*, 1885. *Blackbrook.*—Found on Maer Hills. Ran a ring to ground; got him out and killed him. Got on another, and ran to Woore, and lost. Went back, drew Bromley Coppice, and found. Ran to Broughton Birches, Burnt Woods, Cheswardine, and on into Bishop's Woods, and killed him in the middle. A good day.

"*February 17th*, 1885. *Walton Hall.*—Drew Walton Gorse and Spinnies blank, and Wincote Wood, but found in Mr. Lyon's covert at Johnson, and ran in a figure of eight for two hours and thirty-seven minutes round Knighton, Offley, Eccleshall, Norton Bridge, etc., and killed him at Chebsey. A good run.

"*February 27th*, 1885. *Wrinehill Mill.*—First drew Betley. Found in the gorse. Ran by Cradock Moss to the Gladdings, back to Wrenches Wood and Betley, and back to Madeley and the Gladdings, and on to Hayes Wood, and killed him. Two hours and ten minutes.

"*March 21st*, 1885. *Swynnerton Old Park.*—Found in Old Park. Ran round a time or two, and at last got on a good fox in Harley Thorn. Ran to Tittensor Common, down over river and over Downs Banks, through Kibblestone Gorse, and killed at Moddershall. One hour and ten minutes. Came back to Hanchurch Plantation; found. Ran a ring, and lost in Trentham Wood.

"*March 30th*, 1885. *Woore.*—Drew Mill Hay first. Found, and ran fast to Doddington, and on by Walgherton Lodge to Hankelow, and killed in the river Weaver in the Cheshire country. Found a second at Buerton Gorse. Ran a good ring to ground in a drain at the Lodge Farm, Audlem. A good day. Best scent of the season.

"*April 2nd*, 1885. *Ashley Village.*—Found our first fox on Ashley Heath. Ran very fast to Maer Hall to ground; got him out and killed. Found a second at Broughton Park. Ran a wide ring by Chatcull, Bromley, Ashley village, Broughton Birches, back by Bromley Coppice to Maer Hall, and killed on Berry Hill, Maer. One hour and fifteen minutes. P.S.—Got a bad fall at Wellings. Jumped in a rabbit-hole."

Apparently the fall had no serious results, for we find Dickins was out again with his hounds as usual on April 4th. The season ended on April 17th with an average day's sport, the meet being Heighley Castle. Record for the season, eighty-three foxes killed, fifty run to ground. One hundred and three days' hunting. A very fair season indeed.

The regular season of 1885–86 opened well, with some good runs in November and December. The following account of the opening day (November 2nd) appeared in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 7th :—

### OPENING MEET OF THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE.

The opening meet of the North Staffordshire Hounds took place at Woore on Monday. The weather was all that could be desired, and much more appreciated as being such a delightful exception to the dreary weather we experienced previously. The number was about the average with this pack. Woore, with its historical name, being one of the most sporting meets, always commands a good muster. There is also the proverbial hospitality, which the good people at the Manor House always show to their friends : this makes Woore still more attractive. The first meet has many enjoyments—the hearty shake of the hand of old and young, the congratulation of friends, the happiness of again being brought together after months of separation of old hunting friends to enjoy the noble, health-giving, and pleasant pastime on the old hunting-grounds. We were pleased to see Dickins looking so well and none the older, with his lively "ladies" fit and well about him. Boxall seems quite up to the mark, and none the worse for his shake at Woore races; the new second whip and second horseman looked smart and well in their span-new scarlets. The first draw was Canridden, where a fox was soon afoot; but he did not like leaving home for some time. He was, however, got away on the side towards College Fields, but, tending to right towards the Three Brooks and again towards Mill Hay, he was forced on and crossed the Woore and Audlem road, and was pulled down after a short run. Another fox was then found, which gave us a nice gallop towards Wrinehill, thence to Barhill, and back to Onneley, where he saved his life by going to earth in a sandhole. Heathcote Gorse was then drawn, a fox found, and run towards Doddington—altogether as good a day's sport as a man could desire. All seemed to be well pleased, excepting one or two who, for a moment only, left the pigskin because they could not help it. It was noticed that a few aspiring young sportsmen donned pink for the first time; it is to be hoped they will ride up to their cloth, of which there is not much doubt.

PINK.

On November 21st of this year a sad and fatal accident happened to one of the well-known followers of the Hunt, Captain R. Tylden, R.A., who had a few years before come into residence at Cold Meece House, on taking up the Adjutancy of the Staffordshire and Shropshire Volunteer Artillery. The meet was at Cold Meece, on Saturday, 21st, and in the second run of the day Captain Tylden (who was riding a young horse) came to grief through his horse falling at a small fence at Yarnfield. Unfortunately, the rider was dragged some distance, not being able to get his foot out of the stirrup, and the horse kicked him violently in the face, breaking his jaw and jamming it into the roof of his mouth. In spite of all that medical skill and the best of nursing could do, Captain Tylden died on the following Friday, much and deeply regretted by the members of the Hunt, with whom he had become justly popular as a genial and ardent sportsman and pleasant companion. The following kindly editorial notice appeared at the time in the pages of the *Sporting and Dramatic News* :—

> "I do not know how to speak of my poor friend Captain Richard Tylden, who died on the 27th of last month from the effects of the accident that had befallen him on the previous Saturday, when his horse, after a fall at a fence, kicked him in the mouth and broke both his jaws. He was one of my dearest friends—simple-minded, generous-hearted, and as brave as a lion. I must not say here —I cannot say—how I shall miss him, but I know that readers will miss him too. His last published work is his story 'The St. Dunstan's Club Cup' in the Christmas Number of this paper, an admirable story, as readers will, I am sure, agree. Years ago he used to send me bright little articles, chiefly the result of his observations on hunting or about training and riding jump races, and one day I suggested that he had better choose a *nom de plume.* 'Choose one for me ; call me what you like,' he said, and I signed the next article 'Pigskin.' Readers know to how many columns full of affectionate admiration for the horse, and keen appreciation of his ways, of hints to the rider, which were the result of his own observant experience, the signature was appended. I can hardly yet realize that I have heard his cheery voice for the last time, and that the post will no more bring me letters full of kindly humour and shrewd observations in his familiar hand."

The next entry from Dickins's diary of a good day's sport from Johnson Hall, ending with a very fast fifty-five minutes to Ellerton in Shropshire, on November 30th, 1885, only reads in the huntsman's concise and modest account as quite an average day, but the present writer is assured by Mr. W. W. Dobson, who was one of the few in at the finish (and no one is more competent to give an opinion), that the gallop from Wincote Wood was a very fine run indeed, and without a check, Dickins and Boxall, and Messrs. Tinsley and Dobson, being about the only ones in at the finish, the horses so dead beat that Dickins and Mr. Dobson had to get off and lead for the last field or two. The pace must have been something quite out of the common, and a kill was the only thing wanting to complete the record.

The following is Dickins's brief record of the day :—

"*November 30th*, 1885. *Johnson Hall.*—Found in Mr. Lyon's covert, and killed. Got away with a second. Ran by Wincote Wood at a great pace, and killed him in ten minutes. Went back to Wincote. Found. Ran by Johnson Hall down to Copmere, to the left on to Offley Grove, over the Canal as if for Knighton Wood, but did not go in, but went right on to Ellerton, where he beat us. Time fifty-five minutes.

"*December 5th*, 1885. *Whitmore Station.*—Found in Whitmore Wood. Ran a ring and away by Hayes Sprink to Duns Wood, and killed at Keele Station. Found a second fox in Bentylee Wood at Keele. Ran rings round Keele and Whitmore, Hayes Sprink, etc., for three hours, and had to leave our fox at dark.

"*December 20th*, 1885. *Norton-in-Hales.* Found on Betton Moss, and ran to ground on the railway. Bolted him, and ran fast to Bellaport, and lost him. Found a second in the Dales, but did no good. Found again in Highfield Gorse. Had a capital run by Betton, over Canal to Styche, and ran to ground near Market Drayton."

The following account of a meet at Cresswell Hall, on December 26th, 1885 (Boxing Day), is from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of January 2nd, 1886:—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

On Saturday the North Staffordshire Hounds met at Cresswell Hall for the first time. This being made a fixture is no doubt due to Mr. G. Meakin being a liberal supporter of the Hunt and a preserver of foxes. The members of the Hunt were liberally entertained at the Hall. The meet was a large one, due mainly to the proximity to the county town, for it seemed that every class had its representative. There must have been some hundreds in the park, every conceivable conveyance being called into requisition—the pony-cart, with its freight of six or seven hale men, who looked more like carrying the small pony. The withies behind the Hall were first drawn. There was soon a fox on foot, which ran across the park, to the great amusement of the pedestrians; but on account of the great crowd nothing could be made of him, and, after drawing the covert on the opposite side of the road, the order was given for Yeld's Rough, where a fox was at home, and he seemed to have a will of his own, for, after crossing the field at the back of the Rough, where we tried to prevent him, he crossed the brook at the bottom, and then the railway. Of course, the field had to ride for the bridge, and it was fortunate the hounds checked, giving a chance to get up with them. The hounds now settled down in good earnest and raced up to Whitgreave Wood, where he turned short, probably headed, and made the village; leaving this to his left, he went on to Bridgford, but the river Sow and the railway were obstacles friendly to the varmint, for his line could not be hit off satisfactorily on the other side. This was a very pleasant run for about twenty-five minutes. Thinking he might have returned to his old haunt, the Yelds was run through again; but this wily one knew better: he was not there. Quite right from the huntsman's point of view, but bad for a covert. Shallowford Gorse was then drawn. The order to the field to stop at the gate was given by the Master, as is usual here. This rule might be observed at other weak coverts, with the advantage of not heading foxes back into the covert and into the pack. Thanks to the noble owner of this covert, some two hundred or three hundred trees were cut down last spring to allow the underwood to grow, and the tree-tops laid down as a cover. Only a nominal rent is paid by the Hunt for this cover. But to return to the gate. We soon hear the glad announcement, "Gone away," when we are released from our restraint, and every one is free to do the best he can, barring, of course, anything to interfere with sport or the etiquette of the hunting-field. The fox pointed as if going to Norton Bridge, then to the right, through Mr. William Ball's planting, by the side of his house, straight ahead as if for Mr. Sneyd's new gorse, leaning to the left as if for Walton Heath; leaving this also to the left, he made for the Black Planting at Pirehill, though without dwelling a minute, and up to the house. The pace to this was very fast, but no sooner had the hounds got clear of the surroundings than they raced at a fearful pace. The pack certainly here had the best of it, for they were leaving us behind, and not surprising, considering the rough and big fences, but it is astonishing how good horses will struggle on; what willing, noble animals they are! From Pirehill he led straight towards Whitgreave village; leaving the wood to his right, he went on to the farm on the hill, and then back to Shallowford Gorse at a telling pace, did not stay a moment, out on the far side, but taking a nearer line, again towards the Black planting, and saved his brush by going to earth in a drain on Mr. Titterton's farm near the house, where he was left safe, as Mr. Titterton gave his word to see no harm befell him, and it is sincerely to be hoped he lives to give us another such a gallop. All expressed themselves delighted with the day's sport, and it certainly will be remembered as one of the red-letter days of the season.—PINK.

"*January 4th*, 1886. *Weston Hall, Crewe.*—Found in a small covert at Basford, but killed him at once (got a wire on). Found another at Betley Gorse. Ran a ring to Madeley and back, and away by Balterley Heath to Barthomley Drumble; on nearly to Foxley, turned to the right up to Audley, and on to Hayes Wood and Walton's Wood, Madeley, through and on to Keele Station, and back to Coal Pit Wood, where he got to ground dead beat. A good day."

Soon after this a frost set in, which lasted nearly all through the month of January and the early part of February, 1886.

"*February 22nd*, 1886. *Woore.*—Found in Canridden. Ran a fast ring by Three Brooks and Buerton Gorse back to Canridden, and killed in covert. Found a second in Admiral's Gorse. Ran to Harrow's Wood and on by Buerton village to Chapel Wood at Doddington, into the park, to ground in a drain. Found again in Checkley Wood. Ran to Wrinehill and Madeley, and stopped hounds.

"*March 27th*, 1886. *Loggerheads.*—Went to Ashley for the first draw. Found. Ran fast to Betton, and lost. Drew the Folly blank, and went on to Forty Acres. Found. Ran fast by Mucklestone to Oakley Folly, over the park to Betton and Brown Hills, and back to Betton Hall, and killed him.

"*April 7th*, 1886. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Found on Fradswell Heath, and killed in covert. Got away with a second. Ran to Hose Wood, Draycot, and by the Bird-in-Hand to Spot Nursery and on to Moddershall, through and on to Barlaston, to the left by Hartwell to Downs Bank, Gorse, to ground. Did not find again."

Record for this season, sixty-one foxes killed, forty-eight run to ground. Eighty-six days' hunting altogether. Long frosts in January, February, and March. Hunting much interrupted. Not a bad record considering the interruptions.

The following interesting account of three good days' sport, on February 12th, 13th, and 15th, 1886, appeared in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of February 20th of that year. We would call special attention to the sensible remarks of " H. S." on the wire question, which are, unfortunately, just as appropriate and as much needed now as then :—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT.

After more than a month of most provoking weather, now raising the hopes of the skaters, and then dashing them to the ground with a thaw, only to be followed by a blow to the hopes of both skaters and fox-hunters in the shape of deep snow and ice-covered roads, the patience of the much-enduring fox-hunters has ceased to be tried, and the followers of these hounds have been rewarded by some capital sport. On Friday, the 12th inst., the meet was at Walton Hall, the seat of Colonel Chambers, a great supporter of the North Stafford Hunt, and a staunch fox-preserver. He has made a new gorse within a few hundred yards of his house, and though it is only of two or three years' standing, it has already furnished good sport, and bids fair to be as good a fox covert as any in the Hunt. On December 4th an old dog fox was found at home there, and furnished one of the best runs these hounds have had this season—a good hunting run, though somewhat ringing, of one hour and twenty-five minutes, ending with a fair kill in the open. Every one was therefore doubly sorry last Friday when the new gorse failed to hold a fox, for they knew how disappointed its owner would be. After continuing their search in vain through the Hilcot and Chebsey Coverts and Yeld's Rough, these hounds found one of the right sort in Shallowford Gorse, a covert that has furnished some of the best runs in the annals of the North Stafford Hunt. Breaking away in the direction of Norton Bridge Station, Reynard soon began to turn to the right, and worked his way in a wide ring to the Black Planting at Pirehill and on to Yarlet Hill. Here he was viewed, and the hounds rattled him across the Stafford road and by Yarlet Hall down to the meadows in the valley below the Orange Hayes. Here he was again seen not far in front of the hounds, and they continued to bustle him along the side of the Trent until a large rabbit-burrow in a hedgerow near Little Aston afforded him shelter from his pursuers. Time, thirty-five minutes. Cold Meece Gorse was drawn later in the day, and the hounds had not been in it many minutes before Reynard was viewed stealing away towards Cold Meece House. A very fast ring of fifteen minutes ensued, when he saved his brush by getting to ground in a disused marl-pit. The new gorse at Cold Meece, made but two years ago by the Master of the North Stafford, promises to be second to none in the Hunt, both from its position and from the way in which foxes have taken to it from the very first season of its existence.

On Saturday the fixture was Blackbrook. The hounds were put into the Willoughbridge end of Maer Hills, and two or three foxes were on foot at once. Rattling one along the whole length of the hills to the Camp Hills end, they brought him back along the top and forced him out towards Aston, and then ensued the run of the season. Leaving Aston to the left, they crossed the North

Staffordshire Railway and up the hill past Onneley nearly to Finson's Hay. Here, bending to the left, the chase went straight on over the pick of the Woore country, passing by Mill Hay Wood on the left and Harrow's Wood and Three Brooks on the right, and across the Woore and Audlem road to Buerton Gorse. By this time horses were beginning to show evident signs of having had enough, and a few minutes' breathing-time while the hounds were working out the line through the Buerton Covert were most acceptable. Reynard also showed signs of being beat, for after having gone on from Buerton as if for Corbett's Gorse, he turned short to the left to College Drumble, and then short back again to Buerton, where he got to ground in what appears to be an old earth in a field adjoining the gorse. Time, one hour and ten minutes; distance gone over, eleven or twelve miles.

Last Monday saw these hounds at Doddington. Twelve degrees of frost the previous night had made the ground very hard, and though an extra half-hour had been allowed to give the sun more time to dissipate the effects, the ground was quite hard in places till the afternoon. Chapel Wood was drawn first, and, as usual, was found to hold one if not more foxes. One at length broke away in the direction of the Hall, but the scent was very bad, and it was only by dint of great perseverance that Dickins was able to work out a very ringing dodging line through Shaw's Rough and Blakenhall Moss and back by Doddington Mill to the Chapel Wood, and thence back towards Walgherton. Near the Boar's Head we learned that our fox had been seen making for the Cliffe at Wybunbury, and sure enough he jumped up in front of the hounds out of a hedgerow just before reaching the Cliffe. The hounds raced him through the Cliffe and on to Lea Forge, where they ran him into a cartshed, and received the reward of a most persevering hunt. In the afternoon a move to Finson's Hay Gorse resulted in a fox breaking away towards Woore, and with the aid of two or three friendly "holloas" a poor scent was worked out through the Mill Hay and Harrow's Wood and back round the Admiral's Gorse, and through Mill Hay again to the well-known Canridden. Up to this the scent had been very poor, but it now greatly improved. Either our run fox, or possibly a fresh one, was viewed away from Canridden, and took us fast and straight by the Three Brooks and Buerton Windmill to Woolfall. Here we came to slow hunting again, and after crossing the Hankelow Brook we found ourselves close to Audlem, where the hounds came to a check at a road. A "holloa" back now brought us in the direction of Buerton, but on ascertaining from some men that the fox then in front of us had been gone some time, and was undoubtedly a fresh one, the hounds were stopped at five o'clock. Time from putting them into Finson's Hay Gorse till they were stopped, two hours. I was sorry to observe on all three days wire in a good many fences. This has become a serious danger in this, as in many other, Hunts. The districts of Brocton, Slindon, and Cotes are covered with wire, and it has invaded the hitherto happy hunting-ground of the Woore country. On Saturday the Master of the North Stafford got pounded by wire near Onneley, and on Monday the Master of the South Cheshire narrowly escaped a bad accident jumping a fence near Audlem. This particular fence was an example of the very worst and most "trappy" description. A thick fence on a high bank with a wire twined among the quick and briars in such a way that even after Mr. Corbet's horse and another that followed him had evidently caught in some unlooked-for obstruction, it was only with difficulty that the treacherous wire could be detected. Would that landowners and others would become more alive to the necessity of exerting their influence, each one as far as he possibly can, to check the use of wire. It is becoming a vital question affecting the very existence of hunting. As far as

North Staffordshire is concerned, it is a well-timbered country, and almost every landed proprietor might easily find plenty of trees on his property that are interfering with good farming and that are of but little value and no ornament, and which could not be put to a better use than in making posts and rails in place of this miserable wire. This is already done on the best-managed estates, and if their example is not followed more generally it will not be long before some putter-up of wire may find a very serious or even fatal accident laid at his door. One frequently sees, side by side, two fences, one in which the farmer has endeavoured to make up for past neglect with wire, and the other in which stunted, superfluous hedgerow timber is growing to the detriment of good farming and to the destruction of the fence in which it is growing. The judicious use of such timber would help the farmer considerably in these bad times, and would remove any need for the use of wire. H. S.

The wire question was evidently causing much anxiety to the Master and the Hunt Committee about this time, and the following circular was sent out to landowners and farmers in the North Staffordshire Hunt, and a similar letter from an unknown correspondent was also inserted at the time in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* :—

Swynnerton Park, Stone, January 13th, 1886.

Dear Sir,

By desire of the Marquis of Stafford and the Committee of the North Stafford Hunt, I have to beg your kind attention to the dangerous and increasing practice of laying strands of wire along quick fences, and in other situations where their presence cannot be readily detected by a horseman. Numerous accidents, some of them fatal, have already occurred from this cause in various parts of the country. I feel sure, therefore, that you will pardon my expressing the earnest hope of the Hunt, that you will do all in your power to prevent the use of wire in the above-named way, and to have it removed in places where it already exists and where it is especially dangerous.

The Hunt would also feel much indebted to you if you would discourage the use of *barbed* and all kinds of wire on your estate or holding in any way, using where possible timber instead.

I remain, yours faithfully,
W. Fitzherbert-Brockholes,
Hon. Sec., North Staff. Hunt.

The following is the anonymous letter referred to above as appearing in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* :—

### WIRE IN FENCES—A FOX-HUNTING DANGER.

*To the Editor of the "Staffordshire Advertiser."*

Sir,—The practice of using wire to strengthen and repair fences is increasing so much, that I would ask you to allow me to take advantage of the large circulation of your paper to make a few observations about it. Not a winter now passes without the occurrence in various parts of the country of accidents, many of them serious and some even fatal, caused by wire in fences. Few people think, when they put up a wire along an old fence, that they are putting up what may prove to be the cause of serious injury or even the death of one of their fellow-men.

I need hardly say that fox-hunters are the chief sufferers from this danger. Now, of course, fox-hunting is regarded from very different points of view by different persons. There are people who are fond of hunting; there are those who do not care about it themselves, but who wish that their neighbours and others who do like it should enjoy themselves; and there are those who dislike hunting. Obviously, no one in the first two categories would do anything detrimental to hunting, while of all those who would come in the last category there would not be one, I am sure, who would knowingly do anything that would endanger the life or limb of perhaps his friend and neighbour. Cheapness and facility of erection may be alleged in favour of strengthening weak fences with wire; but might not they be made good equally well in other ways? A little more care of the live quick would, in many cases, render any wire or timber unnecessary. On some properties there are quantities of inferior timber growing that will never be of much value, and which might be utilized to strengthen weak fences without injuring the pocket of either landlord or tenant to any great extent.

If, however, a farmer with the best intentions finds himself unable to avoid using wire along any given fence, then I would beg of him to put it up conspicuously, so that it may be readily seen at a short distance, and not so run along the fence as to be a treacherous and possibly fatal snare to some unfortunate rider.

I remain, etc.,
LIVE AND LET LIVE.

This letter was endorsed by a short editorial note appearing in the same issue, as follows :—

"We understand that the North Staffordshire Hunt have recently had under consideration the numerous cases of ACCIDENT which arise to HUNTING MEN from the practice of using wires to strengthen and repair weak fences. It is the farmers who are responsible for the mischief caused in this way, and it is to them that an appeal is addressed which appears in our columns to-day in the form of a letter, and which we hope will have some effect for good, especially in those cases where the harm is done unwittingly of the evil which may follow. It is in the invisibility of the wire that the great danger lies, and our correspondent, in his very moderate appeal, requests that at any rate, if wire must be used, it may be put up conspicuously, so that it may be readily seen at a short distance."

We wish we could say that we believed these appeals had had the desired effect, but we fear there is still far too much wire in the district.

The Hunt Committee at that time (1886) consisted of the following gentlemen, most of whom remained in office for some years afterwards. They were appointed in the year 1885 :—

Blagg, C. J.
Boote, R.
Bowers, W. E.
Broughton, Delves.
Buller, Sir Morton.
Buller, Colonel R.
Chambers, Colonel.
Chetwode, Sir George.
Davenport, H.
Donaldson Hudson, C.
Edwards-Heathcote, J. H.
Fitzherbert, Basil.
Fitzherbert, F. E.
Fitzherbert-Brockholes, W.
Heath, A. H.
Heath, James.
Hollins, Colonel.
Keary, W.
Lyon, C. E.
Nugent, Lieut.-Colonel.
Peake, Joseph.
Philips, J. W.
Ridgway, E. A.
Shaw, E. A.
Sneyd, Ralph.
Stafford, Marquis of.
Sutherland, Duke of.
Tarbat, Viscount.
Tayleur, Charles.
Taylor, James.
Twemlow, F. R.
Wedgwood, C. F.
Wicksted, G.
Wise, L. A.
Wood, R. N.

The committee had, soon after their appointment, to deal with certain boundary questions which had arisen between the North Staffordshire Hunt and their neighbours of the South Cheshire and the North Shropshire Hunts; but as the questions were of a purely local character, and not of much general interest, and as they were settled amicably to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, it seems scarcely worth while now to go into detail, or to reproduce the correspondence. Suffice it to say that the question between the North Staffordshire Hunt and the Cheshire, which was of rather a more important nature than that with the Shropshire, was settled by a reasonable give-and-take arrangement, provisionally arranged by Lord Combermere and Mr. Henry Tollemache, representing the Cheshire, and by Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes and Mr. F. R. Twemlow, on behalf of the North Staffordshire Hunt, and afterwards ratified by the committees of the respective Hunts.

The following are extracts from the North Staffordshire Hunt minute-book for 1886:—

"Minutes of a meeting of the North Staffordshire Hunt Committee, held at Trentham Hall on July 29th, 1886. Present: Marquis of Stafford, Colonel R. Buller, R. N. Wood, B. Fitzherbert, E. A. Ridgway, E. A. Shaw, C. J. Blagg, W. E. Bowers, J. Peake, R. Boote, and W. Fitzherbert-Brockholes.

"Lord Stafford announced that he would be absent from England for some months, and expressed his wish that Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes should act as Master during his absence. This arrangement was agreed to.

"Proposed by Mr. Boote, seconded by Mr. Blagg, and carried, that the business of collecting subscriptions be managed by a sub-committee, and that Mr. A. Simpson be appointed hon. secretary to the Subscription Committee, *i.e.* W. Fitzherbert-Brockholes, J. E. Heathcote, R. Boote, C. Tayleur, C. J. Blagg, and J. Peake.

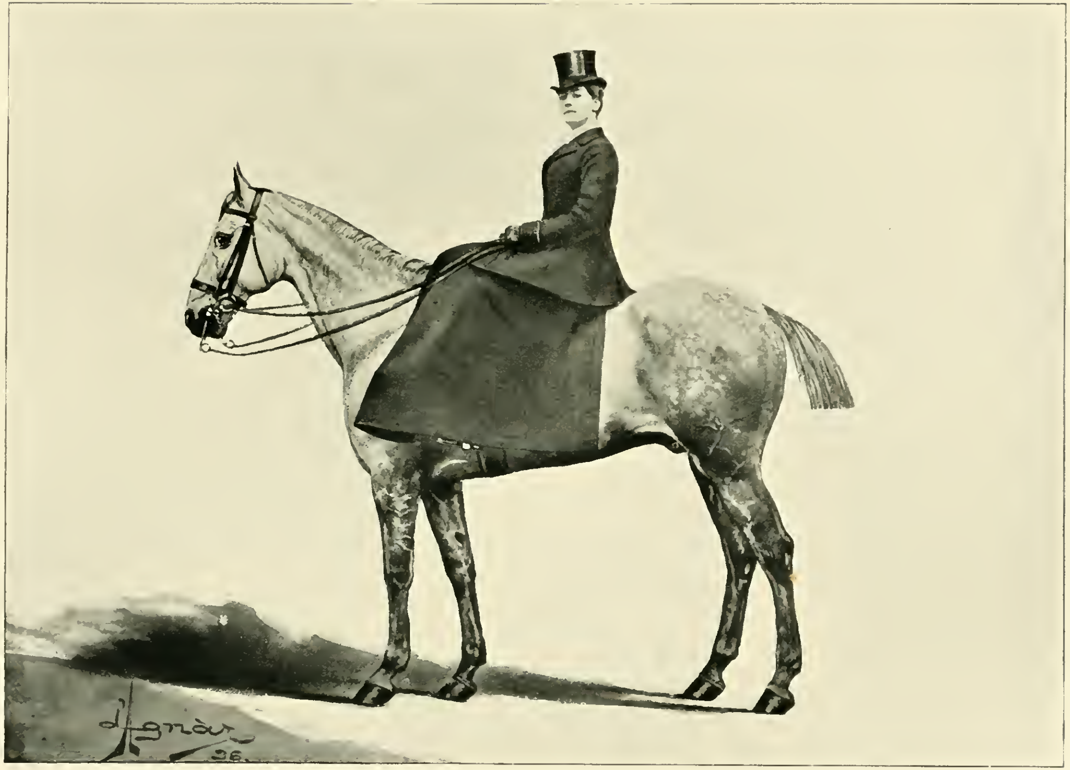
"Resolved that, on behalf of the North Staffordshire Hunt, this meeting tenders its best thanks to Mr. Bowers for his offer of making a new gorse at Nobut, near Leigh, and that it be accepted."

We are reminded by the first paragraph above quoted that this was the year in which Lord and Lady Stafford started for their tour round the world, which occupied them from the beginning of October, 1886, to the following June, of course involving to them the loss of the hunting season of 1886–87. We have refreshed our memory by again referring to the charming little volume which Lady Stafford wrote and published some time after her return, under the title, "How I spent my Twentieth Year." This pleasant, unaffected journal is illustrated with a number of sketches from nature, and portraits engraved from Lady Stafford's drawings. We must resist the temptation to quote largely from this attractive book —for is it not open to all readers?—but one short extract from the last page we may be pardoned, perhaps, for reproducing here. Lady Stafford is writing up her journal on board the *Servia*, in the early morning of June 26th, 1887, when nearing Queenstown, and uses these words:

"I stood on the bridge, not at midnight, but on this fairest of fair mornings, and the remembrance of all our long journey, with its pleasures and lessons and shortcomings, came over me—a time all too quickly sped. May God grant our lives to be ever as blessed as they have been in the last nine months."

The writer feels assured that there will be very few amongst his readers—and none amongst North Stafford fox-hunters—who will not heartily re-echo Lady Stafford's prayer.

It will be remembered that Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes,



THE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND.

*Photographed from a painting at Trentham.*

the able and energetic hon. secretary of the Hunt, was, on Lord Stafford's nomination, appointed Master during Lord Stafford's absence abroad. We have, through the kindness of Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes, been allowed access to his hunting diary during his season of Mastership, and shall quote freely from it in dealing with the season of 1886–87.

But before proceeding to quote from the hon. secretary's diary, we give the following account of the opening day of the season (November 1st, 1886) from the pages of the *Staffordshire Advertiser* :—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

On Monday the opening day of the North Staffordshire Hounds took place at Woore, and certainly no more appropriate place could be chosen in the North Staffordshire country. Woore has inherited a name in the annals of sporting from time immemorial—hawking, archery, boxing, hare-hunting, and fox-hunting. The ash tree on the hill, marking the place of the old shooting-butts, stands there now, reminding us of days gone by, as well as being a landmark to the neighbouring country for miles round. And there is another reason why the opening day of the season should take place at Woore, for there is not a more staunch well-wisher and supporter of fox-hunting than the lady residing at the Manor House, the most hospitable house in the whole Hunt. Long may she live. The day opened with a charming morning, so bright, however, as to give forebodings of rain later on in the day. The wind was blowing from the south, and about nine o'clock it looked very ominous, but the threatening clouds soon cleared away, and at the time of the meet (11.15) the weather was all that could be wished, and remained so throughout the day. Dickins, the huntsman, seemed recovered from his late indisposition, and prepared to manœuvre the pack over any country. Boxall, the first whip, seemed well, and master of the situation, as he always does. I say it to his credit, he is always willing to give a kind hand to any one in difficulties. The second whip, Beames, although he has been in the country only a short time, this being his first season here, looks like knowing his business, and desirous of doing it. All three looked smart and well in their new scarlet. We all regretted the absence of our Master, Lord Stafford, and well we may, for he has endeared himself to every one of us. We only hope his trip round the world may be a happy one, both for himself and Lady Stafford, and that we may have him again with us next season. Still, all must have been pleased at the way the acting Master, Mr. Brockholes, in Lord Stafford's absence, filled the duties of M.F.H. The first draw was Canridden. The hounds soon conveyed to us there was a fox, and after a little bustling around in the covert he broke for Bellaport; but some people on the hill headed him, and he returned to the covert. He soon, however, broke away again on the other side towards the Three Brooks, then to the right, leaving Harrow's Wood to his left and Mill Hay to his right, put his head for Woore Flash, and thence to Heathcote Gorse, and on towards Onneley. The scent had become gradually weaker for some time, and he was given up. Time, about thirty minutes. Admiral's Gorse was drawn blank, but Harrow's Wood proved a find, and the fox went away towards Sandyford, turned to his left, and went straight through Mill Hay, crossed the Doddington and Woore road again, straight to Heathcote Gorse, which he skirted, and went to earth near Woore village. An effort was made to get him out for the good of the young hounds, as there are pretty well of foxes, but the effort was not successful. The hounds were then taken to Mill Hay, where another was soon found, and took a similar line; but this time Wrinehill Wood was his destination, after a smart gallop. What took place after this I cannot say; the bulk of the field had gone home, and all had had enough. Altogether, it must be considered a good day's sport. There were a few good falls, as well there might, for there was some bold riding, considering the fences are so very blind this year.

PINK.

"*November* 6*th*, 1886. *Standon.*—Chopped a fox in Standon Rough. Went away with another nearly to Sugnall, then to the right by Charnes to Green Lane Coppice. Here we changed foxes, and hunted a line slowly to the back of Ashley, where we gave it up. Capital run as far as Bromley. About forty-five minutes."

Dickins's entry of this day's sport is substantially the same as the above.

"*November* 12*th*, 1886. *Loggerheads.*—Found in Forty Acres. Ran very fast fifteen minutes to Pipe Gate, to ground; bolted him, and ran him fast back to Willoughbridge, where we changed. Hunted slowly through Cow Leasows, Forty Acres, Burnt Woods, and out at the Chipnall end. Then ran fast through Park Springs, and by Hales to Chipnall Wood; thence a small ring towards Cheswardine, and back into Chipnall Wood, where they caught him. Time, from bolting fox at Pipe Gate to kill in Chipnall Wood, two hours and a quarter. Heard afterwards that the beaten fox we left at Willoughbridge had crawled across to Maer Hills, laid down in sight of the keeper, and was so done that the keeper picked him up and put him in a pen, where he died in a very short time."

Dickins in his diary describes this as "a good day," and times the run as two hours and forty minutes, which, with the addition of the first fifteen minutes to Pipe Gate to ground, almost exactly tallies with the hon. secretary's record. It is evident that the run was quite above the average. Dickins also notes that the first fox was picked up on or near Maer Hills, and afterwards died.

The next account is from Dickins's diary:

"*November* 19*th*, 1886. *Wrinehill Village.*—Drew Betley Gorse; did not find. Then drew Balterley Heath, and chopped a fox. Got away with another, and ran fast fifteen minutes, to ground by the brook under Betley. Went back to the Heath; found again. Ran a ring by Betley, away by the end of Mill Dale up to Weston village, and on to Crewe Park, and lost him on the railway. Supposed to have run the railway. A good forty minutes. *Note*—Mr. Dalrymple badly hurt from a fall."

From the hon. secretary's diary:

"*November* 22*nd*, 1886. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew Glade Wood and Golling's Rough blank. Found in Corbet's Gorse, but, after ringing about for some time, hounds running sharply at times, he got to ground in a main earth in Golling's Rough. This earth had not been stopped, and this was no doubt the reason of our not having found there. Found again at Bellaport, but an unlucky check near the Canridden spoilt what might have been a nice run.

"*November* 29*th*, 1886. *Woore.*—Found a brace in Canridden. One came away at top side, pointing for Woore. Turning to the left, he skirted Woore, and thence, leaving Onneley to the right, went over Barr Hill, and back into the Madeley end of Wrinehill, and thence back for Onneley, when we gave it up. From Woore to Barr Hill was very good. Drew Heathcote's Gorse, Admiral's Gorse, and Harrow's Wood blank. Found a brace in Mill Hay; after hanging in the covert a short time, a real good one broke away from the bottom. Passing Admiral's Gorse and Heathcote's Gorse on the left, we went through a corner of Wrinehill Wood and on by Wrinehill Mill, and along the left of the London and North-Western Railway to near Chorlton. Here our fox had laid down in a thick pit-hole, and he jumped up among the hounds, and was caught in about three or four fields' distance. Time, one hour and thirty minutes. We never went very fast, but kept steadily at it all the time. It was a real good hunt.

"*December* 6*th*, 1886. *Doddington.*—Found at once in Chapel Wood. After a ring round the Wood Pool, got him away for Buerton, and then ran a good hunting ring by Buerton Mill, and back into Doddington Park. Here the hounds worked up to their fox, who had laid down in some fern, and then raced him by Bridgmere Lodge into Shaw's Rough, and then, after a short ring round three or four fields, they caught him in Shaw's Rough. Time from find to kill, about two hours—hunting all the time. The ring by Buerton was very good; we thought we changed foxes somewhere, but could not be sure where. Drew Lea Forge, Jerusalem, etc., blank, but found again at Walgherton Pool. Ran a very fast ring by Hatherton Heath and Houghton's Gorse, and back by Walgherton Lodge to Chapel Wood. Did not go into Chapel Wood, but, leaving it just on the left hand, went on by the Broomlands, and stopped hounds just beyond Hatherton Heath, as it was getting quite dark. Time, about one hour and thirty minutes. The first forty-five minutes was quite first class. After that it became slow hunting. Capital day's sport.

"*December* 8*th*, 1886. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Did not find in Sherratt's Wood, but found a brace on the heath, and ran in rings round Sherratt's Wood and Birchwood Park three or four times and lost in a snowstorm. Found again in Bromley Wood, and ran fast by the gorse and Brindley's Wood to Birchwood Park, and through it by Fradswell Hall and on for Milwich village. Turning to the right up the valley, they went by Hilderstone Hall and Bird-in-Hand, and skirting Bromley and Hose Wood to the river Blythe, and then to the right again by Leigh Station and into Brindley's Wood, where a brace of fresh foxes got up and went away to Sherratt's Wood, and hounds were stopped between that wood and Draycot Woods. Time, two hours and five minutes. Very severe run. W. Dobson killed his horse.

"*December* 10*th*. *Almington.*—Drew Peatswood blank. Found a brace in a covert at Old Springs. Ran a ring by the Spoil Bank across the canal and back again by Peatswood and Old Springs to Johnson's Wood; then across to Hales and round by Almington back to Johnson's Wood; and here a long check occurred, but after a time they hit off the line again by Old Springs to the Spoil Bank. Here our fox must have laid down, for after a short check he was hallooed behind us making for Peatswood, and running him by there they caught him in Johnson's Wood. During this time the Shropshire had been running a fox from Stoke Heath across the canal, through Chipnall Wood by Hales, and then back towards Peatswood, just at the same time as we were running our fox from Peatswood to Johnson's Wood. About a mile from Johnson's Wood both packs got on the same line, the Shropshire about two fields behind ours, and joining, killed the fox together. Either their fox or ours was seen creeping away from Johnson's Wood while the killed one was being broken up. We had been running about two hours, sometimes very prettily.

"*December 13th*, 1886. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in Brown Hills. After a little delay, got him away for Golling's Rough, passing by the left of this covert and by the left of Buerton Gorse, and so to ground in a field near Buerton Windmill. The first twenty-five minutes as good as could be wished. Time from find to marking to ground, fifty minutes. Went back to Corbet's Gorse, found and ran to Betton, where scent completely failed. Went back to Golling's Rough, found again, and ran in a ring back to Betton, where scent failed again."

Soon after the 13th a hard frost set in, and hunting was stopped for the rest of the month and for the first three weeks of January, 1887, so that there is nothing to record until the 24th.

"*January 24th*, 1887. *The Kennels.*—Found at Clayton. Ran a fast ring by Butterton and Cliff's Rough, and back to ground in a drain at Clayton. Left men to dig, and got him out and killed on the way home. Found again at Keele. Ran him fast by Keele Hall and Bentilee to Madeley and killed. Found again in Hay Sprink. Ran through Whitmore Wood and common and back to Keele, where they lost.

"*January 28th. Cresswell Hall.*—Found a fox. Ran him across six fields and killed him. Found again in Shallowford Gorse. Fast fifteen minutes, and to ground near Cresswell. Drew Yeld's Rough and Chebsey blank. Found in Walton Gorse. Ran by Carr House to Wincote Wood, on to Garmelow and back to Wincote, and thence by Eccleshall and Walton to Chebsey, and after a ring round by Yeld's Rough and Norton Bridge Station, lost in a lane at Chebsey village. Time, one hour and forty minutes.

"*January 31st. Woore.*—Found in Canridden. Ran by Mill Hay and Finson's Hay to Barr Hill and on to Wrinehill, where they lost. Found again in Heathcote's Gorse. Ran fast to Mill Hay and Harrow's Wood and back by Heathcote's Gorse to Barr Hill and on to the Bitterns. Thence he took them a ring over Barr Hill and back to the Bitterns, where the fox got up a tree half blown over. Dickins sent a man up, and got him down and killed. Time, one hour and five minutes.

"*February 2nd. Sandon.*—Drew Sandon Wood blank, but found in Top Covert. Ran by Shaw's Wood and on for Hilderstone, turned to the right nearly to Fradswell, thence to the right again, and back to Sandon, where they killed him near the Hall. Capital forty minutes. Found again on Hardiwick Heath. Ran by Orange Hayes and to Sandon, and lost.

"*February* 16*th*. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Could not hunt in Draycot country owing to the wholesale fox and dog poisoning going on there. Five or six foxes, seven or eight dogs, and a lot of cats found poisoned. Drew Black Lake, where we found three foxes. Ran one across three or four fields and to ground, on the Stallington side. Laid the hounds on the line of another, but could not make much of it. Drew the gorse beyond Grange Wood and Grange Wood blank. Found again at Moddershall, and ran by Kibblestone to the Downs Banks, and lost. Hardly a particle of scent. Found again at Meaford. Ran to Downs Banks, back to Meaford, then back to Downs Banks, and lost. Ground full of frost, and we were only able to jog along with great discretion, and it was fortunate, on the whole, that scent was so bad we could not do anything.

"*February* 21*st*. *Woore.*—Drew Canridden blank. Found in Mill Hay, and ran one by Three Brooks and Canridden to Bellaport, and out towards Norton, and lost. Very short-running fox, bad scent, and unmanageable field conspired to this result. Drew Buerton Gorse. Hounds worked out a line to a fresh-drawn earth that was not known before. Found again in Heathcote's Gorse. Ran very fast by Onneley nearly to the Bitterns, and then back to Barr Hill. Here a check occurred, but eventually either our fox or a fresh one got on foot by Barr Hill, and got at once to ground. Left men to dig. Drew Checkley. Hounds spoke to a line in it, but could make nothing out. Drew Wrinehill all along; found in far end nearest to Madeley. Ran fast back through covert to Checkley, then a ring round the covert, and to ground. Dickins went by Barr Hill on road home, and found they had got to the fox and killed him.

"*March* 5*th*, 1887. *Cold Meece House.*—Found in the Gorse. Ran by the Heamies, and across the Norton Bridge road to the North Staffordshire Railway. Here he turned to the left, and, leaving Yarnfield well on our left, ran towards Swynnerton, and did not persevere after we got to the Highlow Bank, as the fox was believed to be a heavy vixen. Found again in the shrubs at Swynnerton; ran by the Pool through the Pilstones, and away to the right by the Birch House Planting, and Cotes and Clifford's Wood to the Waste Plantation, where the scent failed. Cast the hounds on into the Old Park. Hounds got divided on to three or four lines immediately. After a short time got away on one towards Butterton, and ran by the Hall and towards Cliffe's Rough, and lost. Fair day's sport. Would have been capital had the scent been a bit better. No rain has fallen. Ground getting dryer and dryer."

The next account is a good specimen of hunting under difficulties in big woodlands like Swynnerton Old Park.

"*March* 26*th*. *Swynnerton Old Park.*—Found three, if not four, foxes at once on the Upper Heath. Hounds divided in all directions. Boxall went after one lot, which ran their fox to ground on Hanchurch Hills before he could stop them. Another fox crossed the main ride in front of me, with a couple of hounds after it, and this put me and the whole field out and prevented us hearing Dickins go back with eight and a half couple of hounds through Harley Thorn. These raced their fox through Clifford's Wood and over the hill by Beech to Tittensor Common before Dickins could get up to them. Besides these three foxes, I fancy there was a fourth that went back over the field above Harley Thorn. As Boxall was bringing his lot back over the Common two more foxes jumped up, and his hounds subdivided into two lots and got away from him. After a lot of pounding about, at last we got an inkling which way Dickins had gone, and Dickins, myself, and Boxall, each with a lot of hounds, effected a meeting near Clifford's Wood. There we heard of a fox that had been seen a few minutes before by some foot people, but it was too long gone, and the hounds could only work out the line very slowly towards Cotes Gorse. After drawing that and Hatton Bogs blank, we went back to the Old Park to look for one of the many foxes we had found there, but did not get one on foot till we got to Hanchurch Hills. Here hounds got on two lines again! Ran one a ring round in the Old Park, and thence away by Hanchurch and Butterton, and to ground in a drain beyond Clayton. Bolted him with a terrier, but after a very fast ring he got back into the very same drain again. Tried to make him bolt again, but he would not, and finally the terrier killed him in the part of the drain that was under the road, and so we could not get at him.

"*April 9th. Blackbrook.*—Found two or three foxes on the hills, but could not do much with them. After some woodland hunting, went to Radwood Coppice. Found a fox in one of them that took us by Aston nearly to Pipe Gate; then across the railway and by Onneley nearly to Finson's Hay, where he turned to the right and went through Wrinehill Wood and out to the Beech Wood, where the hounds caught him. A first-rate hunting run of one hour and ten minutes. Went back to Whitmore Common. Found a brace. Ran one to ground at once, and went away after the other, which was lost on the common after a ring round by Whitmore Wood. No scent on the common.

"*April 12th*, 1887. *Swynnerton Old Park.*—Found a lot of foxes. Ran first one and then another, but hardly any scent; hounds, however, managed to catch one in the wood. When it got a bit cooler, went on to Whitmore, but drew the common, the wood, Hayes Sprink and Drumble at Whitmore Hall blank. Last day of the season."

The record for the season of 1886–87 was sixty-three foxes killed, forty-two run to ground. Eighty-eight days' hunting altogether. The sport was interrupted by frost for some weeks in January and the early part of February. The subscriptions for this season amounted to £2319 15*s.*, including subscriptions to the covert fund, and this sum was contributed by a hundred and thirty-eight subscribers. The amount appropriated for the covert fund and poultry damage was £400.

In the spring of 1887, "G. S. L.," the well-known writer on horses and hounds, paid a visit to the stables at Trentham, which resulted in an article in the *Field* of April 9th of that year, from which we will venture to quote some remarks of interest with reference to the North Staffordshire Hunt, and the manner in which the Hunt servants were mounted. "G. S. L." says—

"On leaving the kennels I walked over to the Hunt stables, and Mr. Norman, the stud groom, very obligingly showed me the stud. A very useful lot of horses are provided for Dickins and his whips—well bred all of them, and weight-carriers in many cases. Lord Stafford is fond of little horses for his own riding, and several very shapely ones up to fourteen stone had been kept in condition for his lordship, though he had not been at home to ride them. Mr. Norman corroborated what I had heard before, that North Staffordshire is not a horse-breeding country, and he could only show me one that had been bought from a tenant farmer in the Hunt. The majority came from Ireland, and I was shown several by Haymaker, some by Victor, one by Blood Royal, and perhaps the best-shaped one of all by M.D. Outfit, the Blankney stallion, is represented by several that have a good hunting cut about them, and three in one stable—a bay, a chestnut, and a grey—great favourites with Dickins, and well up to his weight, were bought without ascertained pedigrees, though evidently by thoroughbred sires. The stables, which are of somewhat ancient construction, though comfortable, formed part of the old hotel at Trentham, where noble feasts have taken place in olden days; but now the hotel of the place is a little nearer Stoke, and to this place of public accommodation I next bent my steps, to see the host, well known in the country as Peter Taylor, an old racing man, and the owner of a thoroughbred stallion. *En route* I met a young friend who was most desirous to show me everything in the North Staffordshire country, and on nearing Peter Taylor's domain, I was introduced also to a most worthy divine, who knew a great deal more about stud-book lore than I know about Hebrew. I was in good company now to hear all about the North Staffordshire hunting sires past and present. I was told that the number of sires had been greater a few years back, as a breeder at Newcastle, two miles off, had recently gone over to the majority, and he had kept Balquhidar, by Blair Athol out of Phantom Sail, etc., etc. . . . An adjournment was now made to see Mr. Peter Taylor's horse Zeltinger, quite the home sire of the Hunt, as he is within half a mile of the kennels. Zeltinger will be remembered on the turf as the property of Lord Anglesey, who purchased him at one of the Yardley yearling sales. George Fordham won a good race on him as a two-year-old in 1879, the event being a nursery handicap at Newmarket, in which our hero carried eight stone. After a fine finish with Despotism, to whom he gave eleven pounds, Zeltinger won by a head, the field (numbering eleven) comprising such good runners as Scots Guard and Silverstreak."

Then follows a detailed account of Zeltinger's performances and pedigree, too long for quotation here, and "G. S. L." concludes by giving a description of Figaro, another sire in the North Staffordshire country, then the property of Mr. John Bebbington, of the Boar's Head Inn, Walgherton, near Doddington, and Nantwich, but as Figaro has no doubt long ago joined the majority, we may be forgiven for not quoting any further from "G. S. L.'s" chatty article.

We may take this opportunity of saying that Norman, who is above alluded to by "G. S. L.," has lately retired from the post of stud groom, after more than thirty years' faithful service, on a well-earned pension, and lives at Trentham, in a house kindly provided for him by the Duke.

Norman was succeeded by G. Percival, who has been in office about two years, and is keeping up the good traditions of the Trentham stables.

## CHAPTER XI.

SEIGHFORD HALL MEET—GALLOP FROM SUGNALL—HUNT MEETING AT STOKE—OPENING DAY, 1888–89—SPORT IN THE DRAYCOT COUNTRY—WOORE COUNTRY—THE BULLERS—HUNTING FARMERS—MR. J. W. PHILIPS.

THE season of 1887–88 was on the whole a fair average season for sport, and for the record of foxes killed, but hunting was much interrupted by frost, no less than thirty-nine hunting days being entirely stopped from that cause.

The following is from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 12th, 1887 :—

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE.

Seighford Hall was the fixture of the North Staffordshire Hounds on November 4th. The morning was such as to lead to the general belief that it would be a good hunting day, and so it proved. Seighford Hall has not usually been one of the earliest meets in the season, but on this occasion I suppose this was due to the splendid show of foxes found there cub-hunting, and also to the wish to give an early meet to the young squire, Mr. Francis Eld, who has lately come to reside in the home of a long and honoured line of ancestors; and we say "All hail to him!" for he has shown that the same blue blood of the true English sportsman flows in his veins as in those of his forefathers, and which has suffered no alloy. I should like to have said something about the Hall and its pleasant surroundings, but I must not transgress any more only to say that a photographer was anxious to photograph the meet, and, with the kind permission of the Marquis of Stafford, this was done. The Moor Covert was the first draw, and we soon heard sounds that admit of no doubt, and in a few minutes Reynard broke on the side nearest the railway, headed for the Cooklands, then bending to the right skirted the Drakerley Pits, then turning to the left crossed the road from Bridgford to Seighford. (Here the greater part of the field were a little at fault, as they thought the hounds had dwelt in the pits, whereas they had gone along the hollow out of sight.) The fox then made towards the Long Covert, which he passed on his left again; bending to the right, he crossed the Bridgford and Ranton road, and over the brook; then to Oncote, where there was the first check, but only for a minute; the line was then continued towards

Chebsey, but, turning to the right, he crossed over Mr. Browne's farm, Walton Bank (who, to his honour be it said, is no enemy to fox-hunting); he then crossed the river Sow, where a friendly bridge stood in good need, and passed on near Yeld's Rough. Here there was a holloa back to Bridgford, but the hounds could make nothing of it, and before they could get back to the old line the scent failed. Yeld's Rough was evidently his line, as two foxes were seen to go away at the top end (one of them the run one) soon after we had gone to the holloa. The hounds were then taken back to Seighford, and, after one or two outlying coverts were drawn, we found one of the right sort in William's Wood, which went away across the brook at the bottom, which obstacle rather checked the ardour of some of the "field." We had a capital run over about five miles of country; time, forty-five minutes. It being now late and the scent cold, the hounds were taken home, after a most excellent day's sport. It was a great pleasure to us to have our popular Master with us again after his long absence, and to see him looking so well; and it was most gratifying to hear there is a probability of his Lordship continuing the mastership of the pack after the present three years' arrangement has expired; and may he do so for many years to come is the wish of all. I cannot come to a conclusion without congratulating Dickins on the smart and businesslike appearance of himself, his "whips," and his "darlings."

PINK.

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, December 24th, 1887:

## THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

The North Staffordshire hounds met at Sugnall House on December 16th, and a good fixture it proved. The day was rather stormy, with the wind blowing fresh. I remember on the previous Friday a friend of mine, a gentleman of great experience in the noble sport of fox-hunting, pointed out a rainbow, and remarked, "There will be no scent to-day; there never is when you see a rainbow in the morning." There were two rainbows visible on Friday, and we had a good run. Now, this shows how very uncertain it is for even the most experienced to hazard an opinion on that fickle thing—scent. After being most liberally entertained by Mr. Williams, the laurels near the house were drawn, as a fox was seen there a few days before; but he was absent. Neither was he at the covert opposite the house; perhaps as the wind was fresh, he thought a more sheltered spot desirable, for we found him in the osier bed bordering Copmere Pool, and he nearly lost his brush at the start, one hound making a dash at him. However, he managed to escape. Now, I believe that narrow escape of the varmint at this stage had a material effect on what followed. He broke for Walk Mill and bent round to Sugnall Wood, through which he went, and crossed the road from Eccleshall to Charnes, and ran in front of Sugnall House. He then put his head for Little Sugnall, and made his line through the following places: Brockton, Ankerton, Badenhall, Magpie Hall, to near Hilcot Wood. Here he seemed to have been headed, for the hounds threw up their heads for a moment, but he was seen by a gipsy girl to pass their tent to the left. The hounds hit off his line and away over the Ox Leasows Farm. (I must not omit to mention, on crossing the farms of Mr. Simpson, Ankerton, and Mr. Bourne, Ox Leasows, the smile of welcome both these gentlemen gave us shows how friendly they are disposed towards hunting, and, indeed, this may be said of all farmers in these parts.) He then crossed the Eccleshall and Norton Bridge road to the Scammill, and made his way to Rodgeley Lodge, which he left to his right, over the Shallowford and Chebsey road to Yeld's Rough, which he skirted to his left, and thence to near Bridgford. Here he caused some trouble; there was the river to cross, and then the London and North-Western Railway. The river was crossed by a bridge; but the railway? Now, this obstacle was considered by some of the field to be impassable, and they made for the ford at Bridgford—a fatal error, for we were never with them again. Up to this point the time was fifty minutes. Many might say this was enough, and we ought to be satisfied; but it certainly was not considered satisfactory by us to be out of what followed. But to return to the railway. "Where there is a will there is a way," and this old adage proved correct in this instance, for two or three energetic sportsmen jumped off their horses and attacked the rails and posts, which they pulled down, and so got across. From this point the fox made for Whitgreave, but seemed suddenly to change his mind, and turned towards Shallowford Gorse, which he passed to his left, and on to Mr. Sneyd's new gorse, then across the Norton Bridge and Stone road, near Mr. Darlington's house, and over the North Staffordshire Railway towards Yarnfield, thence to near Darlaston Wood, and again to the left as if for Swynnerton, but bending again to the right, went to ground on Tittensor Chase. Any one who has an Ordnance map may measure the distance run, and he will find it, as the crow flies, from Copmere to Sugnall House, and from Sugnall House to Whitgreave, about seven miles; from Whitgreave to Tittensor Chase, five miles; thus making the distance from these points not less than twelve miles, and allowing for détours, must have been sixteen miles or more. Time, one hour and twenty minutes. These particulars speak for themselves, and hunting men can form their own opinion on this unusual run, taking into consideration the sort of country North Staffordshire is to cross, with its small enclosures, rough, wide fences, drops, doubles, brooks, by-roads, and railways. I cannot finish without saying the manner in which this run was negotiated by Dickins does him great credit, and shows he has not lost a jot of his smartness and perseverance. I wish to say a few words to those who do not hunt and are troubled with a sluggish liver and take all sorts of medicine to obtain relief. I have found the greatest relief from a gallop across a rough country, such as we had to-day, after a good pack of hounds; and I recommend those who are so afflicted to buy a good hunter or two, and send a handsome subscription to the nearest Hunt, and follow the hounds as often as they can, and they will find more relief and enjoyment than in all the medicine in the world.

PINK.

## The following extracts are from Dickins's diary :—

"*November* 23*rd*, 1887. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Drew Sherratt's Wood blank, but found in the small wood at Fradswell Heath. Ran to Milwich and nearly to Hardiwick Heath, and back to Hilderstone and Fradswell and Birchwood Park. Changed foxes. Ran by Leigh to Heybridge and Checkley, into Park Hall Drumble; through it, and killed him at Fole Hall, after three hours. A good day.

"*November* 25*th*, 1887. *Knowl Bank.*—First drew Mill Dale. Found. Ran to Foxley, and back by Booth's Drumble, and away to Craddock's Moss. Had a turn in covert, and away back to Mill Dale; through it and on by Booth's Drumble, on to near Bignell End, up to Alsager Sprinks; turned to the left, back by Foxley Drumble, and killed him. Time, one hour and fifty-five minutes. Went on to Betley. Found. Ran a ring, and stopped hounds at Mr. Twemlow's garden.

"*December 9th*, 1887. *Shallowford House.*—Drew Yeld's Rough blank, but found a brace at Shallowford Gorse. Ran to Yarlet Hill, and on to Whitgreave, to ground in a pithole; then drew Yarlet and Darlaston Wood blank, but found in Meaford Osiers. Ran by Kibblestone to Moddershall Oaks; through and on to Spot Acre and Hilderstone up to the Bird-in-Hand. Stopped hounds at dark."

After Saturday, December 17th, the hounds were only out for one day during the rest of the month, on account of a severe frost, which lasted until the early part of January, 1888, and on January 11th, 13th, and 14th hunting was stopped by a thick fog.

"*January 25th*, 1888. *Fulford Village.*—Found in New Close Sprink. Ran fast to Brindley's Wood and Birchwood Park, back to Brindley's Wood, to ground. Got on another in Fradswell Heath. Ran a fast ring, and killed in Brindley's Wood. Found again in Birchwood Park. Ran a ring by Draycot Gorse, back to Fradswell Heath, and on as if for Chartley, but bore to the left by Gratwich, over the river Blythe, up to Carry Coppice and on to Loxley, and killed him. Time, one hour and forty minutes."

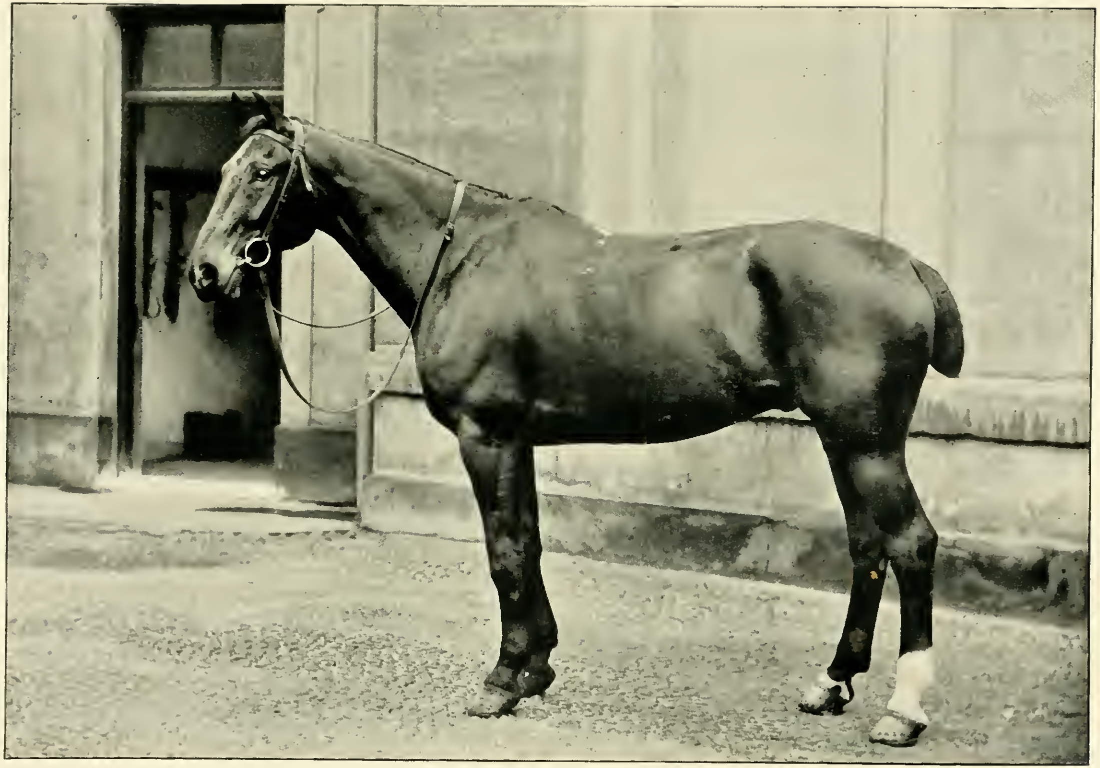
Again hunting was entirely stopped by frost and snow from February 11th to March 6th. On March 9th the pack scored largely, killing three foxes and running another to ground, but of the four foxes only one seems to have shown any sport. This is Dickins's entry:

"*March 9th*, 1888. *Wrinehill Village.*—First went to new covert at Weston. Found, and ran for a few fields and killed. Drew Balterley Heath blank, but found a ringing fox at Betley Gorse. Ran half an hour and killed. Went to Wrinehill. Found. Ran a ring and killed. Got on another, and ran very fast over Barr Hill to the Bitterns; on through Radwood up to Maer Hills, through the hills to ground on Berth Hill. Forty minutes.

"*March 12th*, 1888. *Woore.*—A lot of snow at Woore, so went to Adderley Gorse. Found, and ran fast to Shavington and back to Audlem, to ground under the railway. Went back to the gorse. Found again. Ran into Adderley, through it into Shavington, out over the wall, and away by Wilkesley to Burleydam and into Combermere; through it and on to within a mile of Whitchurch. Had a brace of foxes before hounds, so left them.

"*March 26th*, 1888. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew Betton blank and Golling's Rough, but found in Adderley Gorse, and ran to Audlem to ground. Bolted one and killed in a few fields; then drew Buerton Gorse and Woore blank, but found at Finson's Hay. Ran to Checkley Wood, Wrinehill, and Barr Hill to the Bitterns, up to Maer Hills; changed foxes and stopped hounds.

"*April 3rd*, 1888. *Sandon.*—Drew Sandon and Shaw's Wood blank, but found at Hardiwick Heath. Ran a ring to ground—a vixen. Found another in Orange Hayes. Ran to Hardiwick Heath and back to Holly Wood, through it



"THE CELT."

*From a photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

to Cotwalton Drumble and the Hayes by Kibblestone Gorse, over Downs Banks, past Barlaston village to Newstead Wood into New Park; ran a ring and killed on the railway. One hour and five minutes.

"*April* 11*th*, 1888. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Bromley Wood. Ran by Painsley Hall, round by Leigh to near Carry Coppice, and lost him. Then drew Birchwood Park and Fradswell blank, but found in the belt at Sherratt's Wood. Ran back by Fradswell to Chartley Park, and lost in the park. Went back to New Close Sprink. Found, and ran back to Sherratt's Wood, and stopped hounds. People all gone home."

The record for the season 1887–8 was eighty-two foxes killed and fifteen run to ground. Hunting altogether ninety-six days, forty of which were in the cubbing season. Frost and fog interfered with thirty-nine days. Not a bad record, considering the days lost by bad weather. Subscriptions for this year (including subscriptions to the Covert Fund) amounted to £2386 0*s*. 6*d*., out of which £400 was applied to the claims of the covert and poultry damage fund.

An important meeting of the members of the Hunt was held at the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent, on November 29th, 1887, to consider as to the steps to be taken for hunting the country on the termination of the three years' arrangement with Lord Stafford, which would expire with the current season. The following particulars we extract from the Hunt minute-book of that date:—

"The meeting proceeded to consider what arrangements should be made for carrying on the Hunt at the expiration of the present season. A strong and unanimous feeling was expressed that Lord Stafford should continue to hunt the country, and the following resolution was proposed by Mr. R. Boote, and seconded by Mr. C. Tayleur, and passed unanimously: That this meeting wishes to express its sincere thanks and gratitude to Lord Stafford for having efficiently hunted the North Stafford country for so many years, and to express the great pleasure it gives to all present to hear his Lordship's generous offer to continue to hunt the country for a further term of three years, which this meeting hopes to be in a position to accept. Resolved that every effort be made to secure sufficient guaranteed subscriptions to warrant the Hunt in guaranteeing a subscription of £2000 a year to Lord Stafford.

"Proposed by Mr. C. J. Blagg, and seconded by Colonel Shakerley, and passed unanimously, that Mr. R. Boote and Mr. A. Simpson be asked to undertake the duties of joint hon. secretaries in place of Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes, who resigned that office.

"The following resolution was proposed by Mr. R. Boote, and seconded by Mr. A. H. Heath, and passed unanimously: That this meeting views with sincere regret the decision of our valued secretary, Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes, to resign the hon. secretaryship of the North Stafford Hunt, and wishes to record its great obligation to him for the manner in which he carried to a successful issue the three years' guarantee, as well as the general office of deputy Master in Lord Stafford's absence.

"Lord Stafford having conveyed to the meeting through Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes his sense of the difficulty attending his frequent and unavoidable absence from the hunting-field, and his wish to make whatever arrangements would be most agreeable to the Hunt as regards Mastership in the field in his absence, the following resolution was proposed by Mr. J. Heath, seconded by Mr. C. J. Blagg, and passed unanimously:—

"That the members of the Hunt will be quite satisfied with any arrangement Lord Stafford thinks well to make as regards the Mastership in the field in his absence, and that they consider his views of asking different persons to be responsible in given districts as eminently satisfactory."

It will be sufficient to say, with reference to the matter of the guarantee and the arrangements for the Mastership referred to in the above resolutions, that the requisite amount was raised without difficulty, and the Mastership went on as desired without any break or interruption, very much to the general satisfaction. The resignation of Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes was due to the fact that he was leaving Staffordshire to live at his own place near Garstang, in Lancashire. He was deservedly popular with all classes in the North Staffordshire country, and was not only an ideal secretary, but he made a very efficient Field Master in Lord Stafford's absence for the season of 1886–87 on his tour round the world, being a right good man across country, and a thoroughly good sportsman all round. His successors, Mr. Boote and Mr. A. Simpson, carried on the good traditions of the office, and their services as joint honorary secretaries were much appreciated by the members of the Hunt. Mr. Simpson's services are continued to the present date, and are simply invaluable. The following admirable circular was sent out to the Members of the Hunt by the joint secretaries, soon after their appointment:—

"North Stafford Hunt.

"Dear Sir,

"As the prosperity of the tenant farmers in a Hunt is such an important factor in the welfare of that Hunt, we have been desired by Lord Stafford to draw the attention of all supporters of the North Staffordshire Hounds to the fact that it would be a very material help to the farmers in this Hunt, especially in these bad times, were they to make a point of purchasing, as far as possible, their corn, hay, straw, etc., direct from the farmers. Many already do this, but perhaps it might be done more than at present. Moreover, the fact of it being known that hunting men were making a point of purchasing their forage from the tenant farmers over whose lands they rode, would tend greatly to the popularity, and consequently to the successful carrying on, of the Hunt.

"Yours faithfully,
"Richard Boote, } Hon. Secretaries.
"Alexander Simpson, }

"February 10th, 1888."

The season of 1888-89 appears to have been rather below the usual average, both in the matter of good sport and in record of kills, and as usual there was a great deal of interruption from frost. The opening day (November 5th) is thus recorded in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 10th, 1888:

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

Woore, November 5th.—Such was the fixture selected by our popular Master for the opening day of these hounds, and there is no place so well entitled to have the honour of the first meet of the season, for probably no other fixture within the limits of the Hunt can claim anything like such an ancient and historical sporting pedigree as "The Woore Country." What other fixture in all the Hunt can lay claim to the thorough-hearted hospitality you meet with at the hands of the highly esteemed lady and her family residing at the Manor? Twenty years ago country gentlemen were pleased to have the meets at their houses; but "a change has come o'er the spirit of the dream" in fox-hunting, as in all other things. This is not to be regretted so far as the inner man is concerned, as no one feels inclined to eat two breakfasts within an hour or so; but its discontinuance is to be regretted, as it gives an importance and encouragement to the sport by the master of the house entertaining the Hunt, and it has its beneficial influence on his dependents and neighbours, which is altogether wanting when the meets are at lane ends and wayside inns. We also lose the countenance given to the Hunt by the bright eyes and fair faces of the female element of the country house, which is pleasant to all hunting men. The opening day in some respects has its special enjoyments; it is the day you hope to meet many friends you have not seen perhaps since the close of the last season, who have been scattered in all parts of the world in pursuit of health and enjoyment "in pastures new," and it is delightful to meet them again on the happy English hunting-ground. It was pleasant to us all to see our respected Master present and looking in good health; long may he reign over us as our M.F.H. Dickins, with his two wiry lieutenants, Boxall and Beamer, looked smart and well in their bran-new scarlet, and fit for work in every respect. This might be said of the lively pack. Judging from appearances, men, horses, and hounds will give a good account of themselves in the coming season if they only have the chance. The first draw was Canridden, which proved blank, and no wonder, considering the previous wild night. The order was then the Three Brooks. This at first seemed doubtful, as the hounds were being drawn out of the covert, when a hesitating whimper was heard that a wily one might be near. This was soon seconded by another, and in a minute the whole pack were on him, and such a burning scent there was and so quickly did they pick up his line that they were three fields ahead before many had awakened to the fact that they were off, and were in consequence left behind. One hundred horsemen at the find; nine of them saw the end. His first point seemed to be towards Parkfields, thence to Woolfall Hall, Woolfall, and Birchall Moss. He then struck his line between the Broomlands and Hankelow Hall; leaving the new Hatherton Covert to the right, he crossed the river Weaver at Austerson, leaving Batherton Mill to the right, on to Shrewbridge, near Nantwich. Here occurred the first check, time thirty-eight minutes, the hounds running the whole time, the only difficulty being to keep them in sight. This must be considered an extraordinary and brilliant run, being a nine-miles point, and occurring as it did on the opening day, when foxhounds, horse, or man, are not supposed to be prepared for such exertion. At Shrewbridge he realized the fact that if he went straight he would lose his brush, so he tried the dodging trick, and thus saved his life. He well deserved it, as a stouter or straighter fox never broke covert. The hounds were taken back to Buerton Gorse, when a fox stole away without being noticed, and when the hounds were put on the line the scent was cold. We left them running slowly towards Highfields.—PINK.—The company included Sir George Chetwode, Bart., Lady Boughey, Mr. R. Corbet (Master of the South Cheshire), Colonel Godson, Mr. R. Corbet, jun., Mr. Shakerley, Mr. Crosse, Messrs. Boote, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Ridgway, Mr. Dobson, Mr. W. Hollins, the Misses Hollins, Mr. R. N. Wood, Mr. Kellock, jun., Mr. Greaves, Major Armstrong, Mr. Parkinson, Mr. Joseph Peake, Captain Fife, Colonel Johnson, Mr. Antrobus (Crewe), Mr. Kierton, Mr. Venables, Major Templeton, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Whaley, Mr. P. Jackson, Mr. T. B. Stevens (Market Drayton), Mr. Wicherley (the Brand), Mr. E. Elliott (Nantwich), Mr. Watmore, Captain Jamieson, Mr. Brereton, Mr. Allmark, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Carter, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. James, etc.

We give some of the best days as recorded in Dickins's diary:

"*November 19th*, 1888. *Doddington.*—Found a good fox in Chapel Wood. Ran over the Park to Shaw's Rough, through it and on to Checkley Wood, and on to Wrinehill, on over Barr Hill to the Bitterns and Redwood, up to Maer Hills, and killed him at Camp Hill. Thirty minutes fast. Went to Finson's Hay; found and ran up to Onneley, and lost him. No scent, late in the day.

"*December 5th*, 1888. *Stoke-by-Stone.*—Found in Orange Hayes. Ran to Cotwalton and the Hayes to ground. So on to Moddershall. Found. Ran a ring to the gorse and back to covert, and killed him. Got on another. Ran to Black Lake, Grange Wood, Stallington Gorse, and on to the Sprinks and Saverley Green, to ground in a gentleman's garden in a drain.

"*December 7th*, 1888. *Walton Hall.*—Found in Walton Gorse. Ran to Chebsey Rough, and killed. Drew Yeld's Rough blank; found a second in Shallowford Gorse. Ran a fast ten minutes, and killed. Found again in the New Gorse at Cold Norton. Ran to Darlaston Wood, Tittensor, and Swynnerton, round by Yarnfield and back to Cold Norton and Darlaston, to ground in a drain in the Park. One hour five minutes.

"*December 24th*, 1888. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Found in Sherratt's Wood. Ran as if for Draycot, but turned to the right as if for Leigh, and away to Chartley Park; ran a ring in the park, and on over the railway, and killed him about a mile past

Grindley Station. Fifty-five minutes without a check. Went back to Birchwood Park; found and ran a lot of rings, but did little good.

"*January* 16*th*, 1889. *Stoke-by-Stone.*—Found in Orange Hayes. Ran a ring by Shaw's Wood, and lost. Found again in Hardiwick Heath; ran a ring to ground in a drain; bolted and killed him. Found another in Shaw's Wood. Ran a ring back to Hardiwick Heath, and lost. Found another in the Lodge Plantation. Ran some time, and killed near Shaw's Wood.

"*January* 23*rd*, 1889. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Hose Wood. Ran to Bromley Wood and the Gorse and New Close Sprink, and lost him at Painsley Hall. Went back to Bromley Wood. Found, and ran a ring, but did no good. Drew Sherratt's Wood blank, but found in Fradswell Heath. Ran by Sherratt's Wood and Brindley's Wood to near Chartley, round by Gratwich and by the river nearly to Leigh, and back to Birchwood Park, and lost him. A good hour and five minutes."

The writer was out, and this is his short diary entry of the day's sport:

"Hunting at Bird-in-Hand. Good run with third fox from Birchwood Park round by Leigh and Field, etc."

"*February* 20*th*, 1889. *Draycot Village.*—Drew the Common blank; found in Hose Wood. Ran fast by Fulford and Spot Gorse to Cotwalton Drumble to ground. Found another fox in Orange Hayes. Ran to Hardiwick Heath and Hilderstone Hall, on by Garshall Green to Fradswell Plantation and Birchwood Park, through and to Chartley Park, and stopped hounds on a fresh fox."

The present writer's diary entry is much to the same effect, except that he adds that the first was a "good gallop, and that hounds clean ran away from everybody. Every one got a good drenching," the day being very wet.

"*February* 27*th*, 1889. *Cresswell Hall.*—Found in Shallowford Gorse. Ran fast to Whitgreave, and lost. Found again in Cold Norton Gorse. Ran a ring and lost him. Found a third in the gorse at Micklow House, and ran to ground at Darlaston Wood. Found another at Meece Gorse, and ran very fast to Tittensor Chase and stopped hounds at dark.

"*March* 20*th*, 1889. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Bromley Wood blank, but found in Hose Wood. Ran fast by Bromley Wood, the Bird-in-Hand, Hilderstone and Milwich up to Fradswell Hall, and on to the Gorse at Chartley; through it, over the park by the Castle to the Moss, through and on by Grindley Station to the river Blythe, and lost him at Kingstone Woods. Did not draw again."

This was a good and fairly straight gallop, and is thus recorded in the writer's own diary:

"Hunting at Draycot Woods. Found in Hose Wood. Good gallop by Hilderstone, Fradswell, and Chartley, and lost on far side of Chartley Moss. Very wet day, thoroughly soaked. Well carried."

"*March* 27*th*, 1889. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Drew the wood blank and Fradswell, but found in Birchwood Park. Ran very fast round by Fradswell Drumble and

Milwich to Sherratt's Wood, back to Birchwood Park; away again over to New Close Sprink, and back by Draycot Gorse and Bromley Wood. Changed foxes; ran on to Birchwood Park and Fradswell to Milwich, on up to Sandon and Shaw's Wood, and on to Hardiwick Heath; had a ring and ran back to Sandon; had a ring and lost. Must have changed three times. Time, three hours and a half."

The season finished with a moderate day at Sugnall on April 9th. Record for 1888–89, forty-eight foxes killed, and thirty-three run to ground. Seventy-nine days' hunting altogether.

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, February 23rd, 1889:

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

*Woore, February 18th.*—We generally expect a fair day's sport from this fixture, and it proved no exception to the rule. The weather, following the adage that "after a storm there is a calm," was both mild and pleasant, after the gales of last week. It gave us all great pleasure to have the Marquis and Marchioness of Stafford with us. The Cheshire, Sir Watkin, and the Shropshire were represented by a contingent from each. It is pleasant to see strange faces, and it is only courteous to give them a hearty welcome; but in these matter-of-fact days, when the hunting world is so exercised in the matters of damage done to farmers—poultry funds, wire funds, etc.—it is for them to consider if a contribution to the above would not, in their own mind, make them feel themselves still more welcome. The first draw was at Canridden; this proved blank, but Mill Hay responded to the second call. Reynard found the coast clear at the bottom, and got away without any hindrance, as the Master kept the field at the other end of the covert. At first it appeared as though his fancy was Admiral Gorse, but he bent to the right to Sillenhurst; but, being headed, he inclined again to the left, crossing the Woore and Doddington road. Again tending to the right, he crossed the Woore and Madeley road at Gravenhunger Moss to Gravenhunger Hall. Near here, a gentleman well known in the Hunt, who had been going thoroughly well, met with a fall, which at first looked serious, through there being wire in the fence. I feel sure the party on whose land it happened would be grieved that any one should sustain injury, and it is to be hoped that both he and his neighbours will remove the wire from their fences in future during the hunting season. From Gravenhunger Hall the fox crossed the Woore and Pipe Gate road near Ireland's Cross, then to Dorrington and on to near Bellaport, leaving this to Canridden, and straight back to Mill Hay (where he was found); right through he went, and round nearly the same line, but this time, instead of taking us to Ireland's Cross, he went straight and crossed the North Staffordshire Railway. Just as the hounds were crossing a train hove in sight, but the driver (to whom our thanks are due) slackened speed and came slowly on until the line was clear. This caused considerable delay, as we had to ride round to Pipe Gate Station, and it no doubt saved Reynard his brush. We again got on his line, and he took us on to Willoughbridge Park, where we lost him. This run occupied about an hour and a half. Bellaport Wood found us another fox, and he took us back to Woore, where I left them at 4.30. I believe the day was brought to a close by running him to earth near the Steeplechase Course. By this time the field had become "smaller by degrees and beautifully less," and even the "gluttons" at the sport seemed to have had enough, and their horses also, for we must have been galloping and jumping more or less for about four hours. During this time there was considerable tumbling, if we may judge from empty saddles, scratched faces, and soiled garments.

PINK.

## From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, April 20th, 1889 :

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT.

The season was virtually closed in this Hunt at the end of March, there being only a few private meets for the subscribers after that date. The season just closed has been rather a remarkable one. There has been no reason to complain of interference by frost, but the scent has been very variable and partial, some hunts being very fortunate in having a good scent generally, and in others very uncertain and erratic. For instance, take the North and South Cheshire: the former have been more than usually favoured with a good scent generally; the latter not so. The North Stafford country has not carried its usual average scent this season, changing even in the course of a run, although it must be admitted the flyers of the Hunt can look back with pleasure on many brilliant runs. This country was only cub-hunted three days per week this season in place of four, and consequently not so many were killed; and, on the principle that "too many cooks spoil the broth," this has somewhat interfered with the sport, as a fresh fox would often jump up in front of the hounds when the run one was being hard pressed, and which not only spoiled the sport, but saved the life of his friend. There has been no lack of foxes in any part of the country, and the best thanks are due to landlords, covert owners, and tenant farmers. The Master (the Marquis of Stafford) entertained the members of the covert fund at luncheon at Trentham Hall last month, when the wire question was fully discussed. (The covert fund in this hunt consists principally of farmers.) All present expressed their opinion that the advantages to themselves and others arising from the country being hunted by a pack of foxhounds were considerable, and that anything occurring to interfere with the sport would be nothing less than a calamity, and all pledged themselves to do whatever they could to discourage the use of wire in their respective neighbourhoods. It was desired that the actual amount expended on hunting in the North Stafford Hunt should be ascertained, and the hon. secretary was requested to take steps in view of this object. A committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Boote, Garde, Wood, Cooper, and Wilkinson, to wait on the landlords and tenants in the Eccleshall district (where wire abounds) to consult them with the object of, if possible, obviating the difficulty. As a good omen, it may be mentioned since the meeting at Trentham several landlords have instructed their agents to remove the wire on their estates.

PINK.

No one who has hunted much with the North Staffordshire Hounds, any time from the fifties down to the last few years, can think of the Hunt without remembering the Buller family, who, from the early fifties down to the end of the eighties, were to be seen in force at nearly all the North Stafford meets. There were six sons, all soldiers, and all devoted to hunting—men of fine presence and cheery, good sportsmen of the best type; of the six only one survives, and he was the oldest of them all, the present baronet, Sir Morton E. M. Buller. The five younger brothers generally got long leave for almost the whole of the hunting season, and used to do their five days a week with the North Stafford and the Meynell, training for the distant meets.

The first of this gallant band of brothers to join the majority was Colonel Coote Buller, of the Rifle Brigade, who was severely wounded in the thigh at Inkerman, and invalided home before the conclusion of the Crimean War. His wounded leg was shorter than the other, and he never was quite the same man afterwards; but he lived till 1868, and went as gallantly and pluckily with hounds as ever, although if he came to grief he knew that he could not get on his horse again without help. Like his brothers, he was a good man with hounds, having been entered early, and having a thorough love of sport. For several years he was honorary secretary to the Hunt, and was a constant and regular follower until illness laid him low. He was gazetted Colonel of the 1st North Staffordshire Rifle Volunteer Battalion on the establishment of the volunteer movement in 1859–60, and held the appointment with much distinction until his death, in the spring of 1868. He was never married.

There are many who still remember the gallant show the Buller family used to make in the North Staffordshire country in the latter years of Mr. Davenport's Mastership. It was a sight to see the six brothers in full hunting costume, well mounted, and well turned out, full of go and pluck, and showing their heels to many a good sportsman.

Their father, the first baronet, the late Sir Edward Manningham Buller, of Dilhorn Hall, who for years was Member for North Staffordshire, was a Liberal in politics, belonging, however, to the school of Palmerston and Lord

John Russell, rather than a Liberal of the modern type. The present writer well remembers a red-hot Tory fox-hunter saying to him, "Well, it would take a good deal to make me vote against old Buller, when I see the way he turns his sons out with hounds, and when I see the young 'uns going so straight and well."

The next of the brothers to leave us was Colonel Frederick Charles Manningham Buller, of the Coldstreams, a most kindly, genial sportsman and friend, and a quiet gentlemanlike rider to hounds. He had some good horses in his day, and went well for years with the North Staffordshire Hounds, and also with the Meynell, riding in a nice quiet style with plenty of courage and dash, but without an atom of jealousy. He served in the Egyptian campaign under Lord Wolseley, in 1882, was present at Tel-el-Kebir, and died in January, 1884, at Hopton Hall, his brother-in-law's place in Derbyshire. He married, in 1881, Miss Alice Jessie Davenport, daughter of the former Master of the North Staffordshire Hounds. His favourite horses were, perhaps, Charley Brown, and a nearly thoroughbred mare, Gopsall, the latter a queer-tempered one, but a real good conveyance across country. His charger throughout the Egyptian campaign was a good brown mare, which had carried him well with hounds for several seasons, and it is worth recording that this mare was the only charger in the Brigade of Guards which had been through the whole campaign, and which marched past her late Majesty Queen Victoria at the review on the Horse Guards Parade.

Colonel Reginald John Manningham Buller (the fourth son), who died in August, 1888, was for many years a prominent and distinguished member of the Hunt, and, until failing health began to tell, there was no better or more determined rider with these hounds than Colonel Regge. He was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, went out in honours in 1853, and rowed No. 4 in the boat race against Cambridge in the years 1852 and 1853, Oxford winning on both occasions. The crew of 1852 was known as "Chitty's Crew," and was long held in high estimation in the aquatic world. The race of 1852 was rowed from Putney to Mortlake at Easter. The following account is taken from the "Record of the University Boat Race," published in 1883, compiled by G. G. T. Treherne and J. D. Goldie :—

"Chitty's crew was a proverb for style and finish for many a long year after the Oxonian victory of 1852, yet, strange to say, no one seems to have found out their excellence except their own partisans until the race had been rowed and won. When the race began, Oxford took the lead on the outside station from first to last, and, after taking their opponents' water, won easily by twenty-seven seconds. The winning crew consisted of the following—

| | st. | lbs. |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Prestcott, O. K., Brasenose | 10 | 0 |
| 2. Greenall, B., Brasenose | 10 | 12 |
| 3. Nind, P. H., Christ Church | 11 | 2 |
| 4. Buller, R. J., Balliol | 12 | 4 |
| 5. Denne, H., University | 12 | 8 |
| 6. Houghton, W., Brasenose | 11 | 8 |
| 7. Meade-King, W. O., Pembroke | 11 | 11 |
| Chitty, J. W., Balliol (stroke) | 11 | 7 |
| Cotton, R. W., Christchurch (coxswain) | 9 | 2 |

"In 1853 no Putney match took place. Cambridge, as the defeated club in the previous *rencontre*, proposed a meeting over the London course in June, but Oxford declined to row at that time of year on account of their Henley engagements, they being the holders of the Grand Challenge Cup. However, it was arranged that the two clubs should meet in the race for the last-named prize, which they did. The regatta came off on June 10th and 11th. The following are the names and weights of the Oxford crew—

| | st. | lbs. |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Short, W. F., New | 10 | 8 |
| 2. Moon, V. H., Brasenose | 9 | 12 |
| 3. King, W., Merton | 11 | 11 |
| 4. Buller, R. J., Balliol | 12 | 0 |
| 5. Denne, H., University | 12 | 10 |
| 6. Nind, P. H., Christchurch | 10 | 12 |
| 7. Prestcott, O. K., Merton | 10 | 3 |
| Meade-King, W. O., Pembroke (stroke) | 11 | 7 |
| Marshall, L. H., Exeter (coxswain) | 10 | 1 |

"The race was hardly satisfactory to the competitors from the closeness of the result, Oxford winning by a foot and a half only ; they had the advantage of the inside berth at Poplar Point, which all know—who have ever rowed at Henley—is a great pull in any boat, more especially in eight oars. The wind blew up stream, and so was in favour of the lighter crew, which was Cambridge. Up to the Point Cambridge held a lead of a few feet, but the fatal corner turned the scale in favour of Oxford."

In April, 1881, a memorable Jubilee Boat Race Dinner was held at the Freemasons' Tavern, Mr. Justice Chitty (afterwards Lord Justice Chitty) in the chair, when Colonel R. J. M. Buller returned thanks for the "Army and Navy" in a speech that appears to have been very acceptable to his audience. It was just after Sir George Colley's sad fiasco at Majuba Hill, and Colonel Buller made a pathetic reference to that event. He had been intended for the Bar, and was reading with that view at Lincoln's Inn when the Crimean War broke out, and turned his attention to the Army. He joined the 2nd Staffordshire Militia in 1854, and in 1855 obtained a commission by purchase in the Grenadier Guards. He served in Canada from April, 1862, to September, 1864, was Instructor in Musketry from May, 1862, to June, 1868, and was on the staff at Dublin during Lord Carlisle's Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, about the years 1859 and 1860. He got his first promotion in 1858, and his latest in 1881, and was placed on half-pay in 1882. He was a handsome, well-built man, over six feet high. From a boy he was a quick observer, and had a remarkably good memory. He was a good conversationalist, a general favourite, and few men had more friends. He was fond of hunting from his school days, and became a staunch supporter of the North Staffordshire Hunt. He also hunted regularly with the Meynell, was well known in the Badminton and the Bramham Moor countries, and in his Oxford days hunted with the Bicester. He married Marianne, daughter of Mr. William Davenport, not long before his death. One of his best horses was Horniblow, an old steeplechaser, and fine, bold jumper, once the property of Colonel Blundell. This horse, whilst owned by Colonel Blundell, ran in the Liverpool Grand National about the year 1860, and won several hunt and military races about that time. Besides Horniblow, Colonel Reginald had some special favourites, amongst which we may mention the Count, formerly belonging to his brother, Colonel Coote Buller, Mariner, Leo, Milksop, Paul, and Rhoda, the latter a very good dark chestnut mare. Mariner and Leo were ridden by him up to the last. One of the well-known Dilhorn horses was Bowsprit, bought in the early fifties from Mr. John Yarde Buller, a good horse, but a puller. Old Jack Leedham used to say of him, and of the Bullers, in his broad vernacular, "They sen they canna hould him at his fences. Ah dunna see as they troyen mutch!"

Colonel Ernest Henry Manningham Buller, the youngest of the brothers, came to a most sad and untimely end, a few months after his brother Reginald's death. He was returning from London to his quarters at Woolwich by a midnight train from Charing Cross, and, getting out at his station on the wrong side, was run into by a light engine, and crushed so severely against the platform that he only survived the accident about three hours. He belonged to the Rifle Brigade, like two of his brothers, and had seen service in South Africa and elsewhere. He was A.D.C. to Lord Chelmsford in the unlucky Zulu campaign of 1879, and at the time of his death commanded a battalion of the Rifle Brigade. The writer would be inclined to give Colonel Ernest as high a place as any of the family as a good man across country; he was determined and plucky, with good hands and seat, and could generally hold his own in a good thing with anybody. He was the youngest of the family, and was only forty-nine when the lamentable accident occurred which closed a career full of distinction and promise. He was never married. Tipperary, an Irish horse, was perhaps the best mount he ever had.

Major-General Edmund M. Manningham Buller also belonged to the Rifle Brigade, and retired with the rank of Major-General, after seeing a good deal of service in Africa and Canada, and elsewhere. For a time he held the command of the Lichfield Regimental District. He was a zealous officer, and a good sportsman, either with hounds, gun, or rod. He was not quite so regular a follower of these hounds as most of his brothers, owing to the fact that for a good part of his time he was away on military duty, and in later years was living at Brocton

Lodge, near Stafford, outside the North Staffordshire Hunt; still, from time to time he was often seen with the North Staffordshire Hounds, and always in a good place, for he had all the love of sport and plucky horsemanship which distinguished the other members of the family. We remember several good horses of his; one, a small black horse, Jack, and a very good thoroughbred bay mare, whose name we cannot recall. He married, in 1874, Lady Anne Coke, daughter of the Earl of Leicester, but was left a widower early in 1876, with two children, a son and daughter. The son is now an officer in the Rifle Brigade, and is heir-presumptive to the baronetcy. General Buller died early in 1897.

The eldest brother, Sir Morton Buller, as already stated, is still happily with us, and the writer does not propose to write of him in such detail as of those who have gone before. Although Sir Morton was not so often out with hounds as his younger brothers, he was always a cordial supporter of the Hunt, both as a landowner and fox-preserver, as well as a keen follower of hounds, and a liberal subscriber to the Hunt funds. The Dilhorn Hall coverts have given us many good sporting gallops in the past, and have seldom been called upon in vain. One of his best horses was the Marquis, bought from Edward Kendrick. Sir Morton was Colonel of the 2nd Staffordshire Militia for many years. In 1863 he married the eldest daughter of Mr. Davenport, of Macr. There are three daughters of this marriage, but no son.

We have not many hunting farmers in the North Staffordshire country as a rule, but there are still a few good ones left, and in the past we have had some good sporting riders to hounds amongst this class, notably Edward Kendrick, of Hill Top, one of the Duke of Sutherland's tenants, who in the days of Mr. Davenport, and for some years afterwards, was a "rum one to follow, and a bad one to beat," especially on his mare Jenny, a clever little mare which he rode with great success for about eighteen seasons. This mare only once, it is said, gave him a fall, and that was when, after jumping into a gravel pit, she was so flustered by the drop that she fell at the next fence and broke her rider's thumb. There are some who still remember the jolly figure of "Ned" Kendrick, as he was generally called, always in a green coat and velvet cap, with rubicund face and grey locks, invariably in a good place, and determined to keep it—full of life and go. He died in 1877, and was almost the last of his type in the North Staffordshire country. He had hunted with the North Staffordshire Hounds for over fifty years. He was not only a good, bold horseman, but he rode with judgment and discretion, and with a wonderful knowledge of the country. About the same period there was Josephs, of Clifford's Wood, a great "pal" of Kendrick's, and of the same hard riding old-fashioned type, who could always give a good account of himself. William Collins, of Toft, was another of the same sort, also a tenant of the Duke of Sutherland's, who generally had a good horse or two going, and knew how to see the fun as well as most. The writer remembers, too, John Astbury, of Oulton, a yeoman sportsman who went as well as most of his contemporaries in Mr. Davenport's time, but who has long since been gathered to his fathers. In somewhat later times there was a hard old farmer, Thomas Weston, of the Waste Farm, Draycot, who managed to see a good deal of sport both with the North Staffordshire and the Meynell, and who knew his way across country, and held his own fairly well, though never particularly well mounted.

The writer remembers him on one occasion falling in with our hounds on his way home on horseback from a funeral, adorned with the hideous hatband and scarf, which were the inevitable appendage of funerals at that time. The ruling passion was strong within him, and it was a strange sight to see the old fellow following the hounds in this weird costume, his hatband flying about as he took the fences gallantly as they came, determined, if possible, to attend two funerals in one day, and, if we are not mistaken, succeeding in bringing off the double event. He too has joined the majority a good many years ago, being a veteran at the time in question, although it was some years before his own finish. He will be remembered by some of the older members of the Hunt as generally accompanied by a little granddaughter on a pony, and attending the meets regularly on the Draycot and Sandon side of the country. George Swift, of Hanchurch, another of the Sutherland tenants, who died only a few years ago, should be mentioned as a typical fox-hunting farmer of North Staffordshire, a genial sportsman and good supporter of the Hunt, besides being a thoroughly up-to-date agriculturist.

Amongst present members of the Hunt no one is entitled to a more honourable place than Mr. John William Philips, of Heybridge, who has for years not only been one of the most consistent supporters of the Hunt, and one of the largest subscribers to the Hunt funds, but has long been known as a staunch preserver of foxes on his side of the country, an influential and valuable member of the Hunt Committee, and one who can always be relied on to promote the sport in every way. He has not only planted a gorse on his estate near Heybridge for the North Staffordshire Hunt, but has planted another near Bramshall for the Meynell Hunt, which has provided some historical gallops from time to time, as recorded by Mr. Randall in his excellent history of the Meynell Hunt. Mr. Philips is almost, if not quite, the *doyen* of the North Staffordshire Hunt, but he still follows hounds with little, if any, diminution of his old fire. We are sure we only echo the wish of every member of the Hunt when we say that we fervently trust he will long be spared to enjoy his favourite sport, and to give the Hunt the benefit of his kindly presence and support. He has generally plenty of good horses in his stable, and is always ready to mount the rising generation, several of whom worthily follow in their relative's footsteps.

The Coyneys, of Weston Coyney, belonged to one of our oldest Staffordshire families, and both of them—father and son—in the early days of the North Staffordshire Hunt under Mr. Davenport, were fairly constant followers. Colonel Charles Coyney (the father) for many years commanded what was then called the 1st Staffordshire Regiment of Militia—now the 4th North Staffordshire—and his son, Walter Mainwaring Coyney, was afterwards Captain, then Major, in the same regiment for years.

Both were fond of hunting, and were good performers across country for some years with these hounds, though latterly, owing to failure of health and residence abroad, they were not often seen with hounds. Walter Coyney was one of the few who got to the end of a remarkable run of five hours in 1857 from Barlaston, which ended with a kill near Leigh Station, as related in the early part of this history. Colonel Coyney died in 1883, and his son, Walter M. Coyney, early in 1884.

## CHAPTER XII.

OPENING DAY AT WOORE—CRESSWELL HALL MEET—SUBSCRIBERS' MEETING AT STOKE—WIRE QUESTION.

THE season of 1889–90 opened with a fair average day's sport from Woore on Monday, November 4th, which is thus recorded in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 9th, 1889:

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

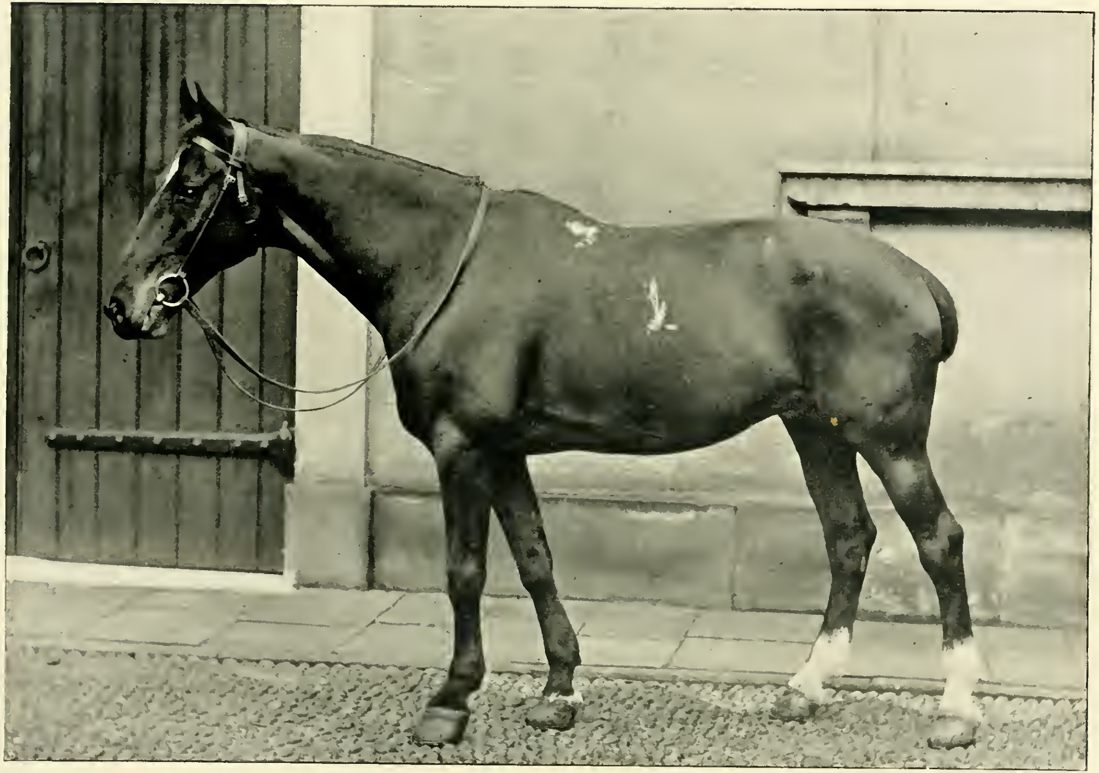
The opening meet of this pack was at Woore on Monday. The "field" was not so large as might have been expected, owing, no doubt, to the South Cheshire hunting at Adderley. The following were amongst those who turned out to meet Lord Stafford: Lieut.-Colonel Sir George Chetwode, Bart., Captain Stamer, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Ridgway, Mr. and Mrs. Dobson, Miss Cartlich, Miss Hollins, Mrs. Wicksted, Messrs. R. N. Wood, E. J. N. Wood, C. Tayleur, R. Boote, A. Boote, Meakin, Birch, Hinchliffe, A. Simpson, Sneyd, Williams (Hinstock), J. Peake, Kirkham, Bailey, Patzer, P. Chetwode, A. Heath, J. Hall, Bond, Coghill, D. Eardley, E. Bourne, W. Sillitoe, A. Campbell, Blockley, W. Eardley, Noden, Wilkinson (Madeley), Wilkinson (Swinchurch), Billington, Bennett, etc. As usual at Woore, quite a crowd of carriages and foot-people put in an appearance. The Hunt servants looked very fit, being, as they always are, very well mounted, and their new outfits reduced their apparent age by ten years. We were sorry to see Boxall on wheels, but he hopes, in the course of a week, to have sufficiently recovered from his late accident (he broke a small bone in his leg) to again take his place in the saddle. The weather was fine, save now and again a few spots of rain, not sufficient to damp one's breeches, to say nothing of our spirits. Shortly after eleven a move was made for Canridden Wood, and from reports we expected "a find;" but no—blank. Mill Hay was next tried, and one got away in a very short time. Here the "field" had a narrow escape of what might have been a fatal accident to more than one rider. The occupier of the field adjoining the cover had fixed a single length of wire, breast high, at right angles to the cover and up to within eight or ten yards of the cover fence. With the intention, no doubt, of keeping the horsemen to the cover side, it was fixed in a valley between where the latter were stationed and where the fox broke. A rush was made, and Lord Stafford just caught sight of it in time to save himself and warn his followers. It was quite invisible, as one gentleman found out; being at the top of the field and not hearing the warning, he galloped into it, luckily without injury to himself or his horse. This incident spoiled the pleasure of a good number for the day. To our fox. Upon leaving Mill Hay he pointed for Finson's Hayes Gorse, but at Woore Flash turned to the right, running direct for the Greaves Farm, leaving Woore on the right, straight on to Onneley, and over Barr Hill, as though the Bitterns was his aim; but, leaving the latter cover to the left, he crossed the North Staffordshire Railway at Aston Cliff, and shortly after was lost. Scent not very good, and only a slow hunting run. Mill Hay was again drawn, and held another of a good sort. Breaking at the bottom end, he went through Harrow's Wood without dwelling, on past Pewitt Hall and Hunsterson, evidently for Doddington, where, in a very short space of time, we found ourselves. After running round the Chapel Wood, he was so hardly pressed that he thought (if foxes do think) it best to make "tracks" for home again. Leaving the wood near the church, he crossed the Newcastle road, and with his head for home, got as far as the Green Fields, where he must have been headed, as he suddenly swung back to the left, as if for Doddington again. He was now getting in a new country, and was not quite at home. Leaving the Park to the left and Bridgemere Schools to the right, he crossed the Nantwich and Woore road. At the Ley Ground he rattled away into Shaw's Rough. Here a slight check took place. Dickins, making a lucky cast, hit off the line, and hounds went like fun as straight as an arrow from Blakenhall to Wrinehill village, where the London and North-Western Railway, after a capital run with a burning scent, seemed to befriend our fox and horses too, for the last few fences were done in a haphazard manner by most of them, and at this point it seemed to occur to the greater part of the select few still in, that home was preferable to a "purler." Dickins and a very few went on slowly hunting in the direction of Leycett when I joined the home contingent. The fences are still very blind, and I never remember the going so heavy at this period of the season. "Croppers" were plentiful, but no injuries sustained.

FARMER.

On Wednesday, December 6th, the hounds met at the Bird-in-Hand for Draycot Woods, and had a good day's sport, ending, as they often do from Draycot, in the heart of the Meynell country. The day is thus briefly recorded in Dickins's diary:

"*November 6th*, 1889. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Hose Wood, Draycot. Ran a fast ring for one hour and ten minutes, to ground in Fradswell Drumble. Found another in Birchwood Park. Ran a ring to Sherratt's Wood. Changed foxes. Away by Chartley Park to Gratwich, on to Carry Coppice and Loxley, and away to Bagot's Woods. Stopped hounds at dark."

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 30th, 1889, we extract the following report of a day's sport from Cresswell Hall, which may be considered rather above the average, although the foxes all through had the best of the argument:—



"BELLAPORT."

*From a photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

## NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

November 22nd, at Cresswell Hall, was the fixture of the North Staffordshire Hounds, kindly arranged by the M.F.H. the Marquis of Stafford, for the convenience of those attending the Staffordshire County Cricket Ball, held at Stafford the previous evening. A mild morning, such as we have been lately enjoying, greeted us as we rode to the meet. The birds were singing, and all nature seemed in a state of quiet repose. A most liberal board was prepared by the owner of Cresswell, who is a staunch preserver of the Hunt. There was a large meet, taking into account vehicles, horsemen, and pedestrians; this is usually so when the fixture is near a town, but fortunately it did not interfere with the sport. The Withy Bed at the back of the Hall was the first draw, which proved tenantless. The osiers on the other side of the road were then tried, when Dickins viewed Reynard stealing away across an adjoining field. The hounds were got on the line, but, being badly pressed by over-impatient riders, were prevented from getting on good terms with him, and were consequently not able to push him. He seemed to take advantage of this by not going straight. However, it was anything but an unpleasant gallop; he took us through Whitgreave to Pirehill. Time, twenty-five minutes. Shallowford Gorse was the next draw. There are always a few anxious moments of suspense to those concerned when this covert is being drawn, as there is very little lying. But, hark! Is that a find? There again! There is no mistake now,

> "For every mouth was open, from the owd 'un to the pup,
> An' aw the pack together took the swelling chorus up."

He broke with his head for Whitgreave, but a too hasty halloa sent him back into covert. The fear was now that they might chop him; but another "Gone away" sounded from the other end, and, although he was halloaed away, the hounds were on the line of number two inside, which they did not leave, and soon dislodged him also at the same end. This proved one of the sort that never lose their courage and do not die without a hard struggle for life. The knowing ones could see from the way the beauties settled down to their work there was something good in prospect, and put themselves down to business. There was little need to "Pray, hold hard;" the hounds had the best of it now, and needed no assistance; if they checked at all, they hit off the line in a moment and were full swing again. We crossed the farms of Messrs. W. Ball, Norton; Darlington, Cold Norton; Weaver, Walton Heath; Birtles, Micklow; Harvey, Darlaston. These respectable tenant farmers, together with Mr. Toon, of Green Hill, on whose farm this good fox was found, are, to their credit be it recorded, strong supporters of fox-hunting. After crossing these farms he went straight through Darlaston Wood; then, leaving the Hall to the left, down to the osier bed by the river Trent, and not liking to face the cold water, he again turned to the left and over the road into the Drumble, and then crossing the road from Meaford to Sandeford into Berry Bank, which he ran through and over the Trentham and Stone road into Meaford osiers. On leaving this, he crossed the Trent by the Hunting Bridge. His point now seemed to be Downs Banks. Again turning to the left, he recrossed the Trent into Tittensor Chase, where he was seen creeping about dead beat; the high fern and fresh foxes protected him, and he escaped. Time, forty minutes; distance, five miles as the crow flies. Most of the field had now had enough, and many went home; but at the request of a few who had second horses, Yarnfield osier bed was drawn, with the result of another thirty minutes through Tittensor Chase, Trentham, into Swynnerton Old Park. This must be considered as a most enjoyable day's sport, fast and straight enough for the fastest, and for the most part over a flying country.

Pink.

The following are extracted from Stephen Dickins's diary :—

"*December* 16*th*, 1889. *Woore.*—Found a fox in Canridden. Ran a ring and lost him. Found another in Mill Hay. Ran a ring to ground near Woore. Found another in Three Brooks. Ran by Pewitt Hall round to Harrow's Wood, and through Mill Hay and the Canridden to Buerton Gorse, and on to Golling's Rough and the Glades, on to Betton, and killed him. A good fifty-five minutes.

"*December* 26*th*, 1889. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Found in Birchwood Park. Ran a fast ring by Fradswell and away by Milwich up to Sandon. On by Garshall Green to Bromley Wood, and lost him. Found another in Draycot Gorse. Ran a ring to Sherratt's Wood and back to Bromley Wood, round by Hilderstone and the Bird-in-Hand to Fulford; over Stallington Heath by Spotacre to Moddershall Oaks, and stopped hounds. Foxes all over the country.

"*January* 20*th*, 1890. *Woore.*—Found in the Canridden. Ran by Woore village, and on to Aston Cliff, to ground; twenty minutes, fast. Went back to Woore. Found in Harrow's Wood. Ran a fast ring by Buerton to Canridden; away by Dorrington to Pipe Gate and Willoughbridge, on up to Cow Leasows and Forty Acres, over Ashley Heath to Broughton Birches, into the Burnt Wood; ran a ring in covert, and away to Broughton Park, through it, and killed him at Bromley Hall. One hour and forty minutes.

"*March* 10*th*, 1890. *Doddington.*—Did not find in Chapel Wood, but got on a fox outside, and ran round to Bridgemere, but did little good—too long gone. Found another in Checkley Wood. Ran through Wrinehill over Barr Hill to the Bitterns, by Madeley Road Station up to Fern Banks, to Maer Hills, right through the hills to near Bromley, to the left to Clayholders and Chorlton, and killed near Hatton Gorse. One hour and forty minutes.

"*March* 12*th*, 1890. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Hose Wood. Ran through Draycot Gorse, and away by Brindley's Wood nearly to Birchwood Park; bore to the left, and killed near Field Hall. Forty minutes. Found another near Moddershall. Ran several rings, but did little good—a bad fox."

The season ended with a moderate day's sport at Ashley village, on March 31st. Record, sixty-nine foxes killed, thirty-nine run to ground. Eighty-seven days' hunting altogether; stopped by frost only ten days. On the whole a very fair season; the cub-hunting particularly successful.

During this season a very important general meeting of subscribers to the Hunt was held at the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent, on February 27th, 1890, with Sir Morton Buller in the chair.

The following are extracts from the Hunt minute-book of that date :—

"The Chairman having read a letter from Lord Stafford to members of the Hunt Committee regarding the carrying on of the Hunt in the future, Lord Stafford made a statement to the meeting to the effect that, as he was unable to reside in the centre of the Hunt, as in previous years, he regretted he could not contribute so much as formerly towards the Hunt expenses.

"It was proposed by Mr. J. W. Philips, and seconded by Mr. B. Fitzherbert, that a vote of thanks be passed to Lord Stafford for the very efficient way in which he had hunted the country for the past sixteen years at very great expense to himself, and to express the desire of this meeting that the difficulties in the way of carrying on the business may be surmounted.

"Carried unanimously.

"Proposed by Mr. C. J. Blagg, and seconded by Mr. R. N. Wood, that an additional subscription be at once raised to provide the necessary funds to meet the extra outlay which will be incurred by Lord Stafford next season.

"Carried unanimously.

"The hon. secretaries having prepared a list to be passed round to the meeting soliciting an additional subscription for season 1890–91 beyond the already guaranteed subscription for that season, and it being found that a sum of £500 was forthcoming and promised in the room by members present at this meeting—

"Lord Stafford acceded to the wishes of the Hunt on the understanding that the secretaries find themselves able to assure him that the guaranteed subscriptions will secure him at least £2000 for next season, and provided it be agreed to that Mr. J. W. Philips be appointed joint Master for the Draycot side of the country.

"Sir Morton Buller proposed, and Mr. C. J. Blagg seconded, that Mr. J. W. Philips be appointed joint Master for the Draycot side of the country.

"Carried *nem. con.*

"Mr. Philips thanked the meeting and accepted the office.

"The following resolution was proposed by Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes, and seconded by Mr. W. W. Dobson, and carried unanimously :—

"That, owing to the difficulty experienced in collecting sufficient money to meet the Hunt expenses, as well as the heavy expenses of the Covert or Damage Fund, the secretaries be instructed to notify to every gentleman, not being a subscriber or the guest of a subscriber, after his third appearance with the North Stafford Hounds in any one season, that the Hunt are unable to continue to allow the numbers of persons hunting with them, and the proportionate damage done to farmers and others, to be increased by any one who does not contribute their proportionate share towards the Hunt expenses, and to request such person to inform the hon. secretaries what subscription he will give."

A circular was sent out by Messrs. Boote and Simpson, the joint hon. secretaries, to every member of the Hunt who had not already given an additional subscription, calling attention to the resolutions of the meeting held on February 27th, and in the result the secretaries were enabled, on May 28th, 1890, to address the following satisfactory letter to the Master :—

"My Lord Marquis,

"Referring to a resolution passed at the general meeting of members of the North Staffordshire Hunt, held at the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke-upon-Trent, on February 27th last, requesting the secretaries to issue a circular to each subscriber soliciting an additional subscription for season 1890–91, we now beg to inform you that we are enabled to assure your Lordship an additional subscription of £700. This amount, together with the ordinary guaranteed subscription of £1750, makes a total of £2450 guaranteed to you for next season. We trust this will be satisfactory to your Lordship.

"We are
"Your Lordship's obedient servants,
"Richard Boote,
"Alexander Simpson, } Hon. Secretaries.

"The Marquis of Stafford."

On June 2nd Lord Stafford replied from Lilleshall as follows:—

"Gentlemen,

"I have received your letter informing me that you were able to offer me, on behalf of the members of the Hunt, an additional subscription of £700 for next season. I must request you to convey to the gentlemen of the Hunt my warm appreciation of their generous offer, and that I shall endeavour to the best of my ability to show them good sport next season. I shall also be glad to cub-hunt four days a week next autumn.

"Believe me,
"Yours faithfully,
"Stafford.

"Messrs. Boote and Simpson,
Hon. Secretaries."

The ordinary subscriptions for 1889–90 amounted to £2268, of which £350 was devoted to the Covert and Poultry Fund.

The wire question during the season 1889–90, as heretofore, exercised the minds of the Hunt Committee and the hon. secretaries, and it may possibly be of some interest to print here a communication from the secretaries and the Wire Committee which appeared in the *Field* of December 7th, 1889.

### WIRE, AND THE MODE OF DEALING WITH IT.

Sir,

Judging from the letters in the *Field*, the minds of hunting men are a good deal exercised regarding the wire difficulty. This matter having been taken in hand in North Staffordshire, perhaps other Hunts may wish to know how it is proposed to deal with it; and if you think the matter worth publishing, we herewith beg to enclose a copy of the Wire Committee's report, which is now being carried out.

Richard Boote,
Alexander Simpson, } Hon. Secretaries.

Shallowford House, Norton Bridge, Stone, December 4.

At a meeting of tenant farmers and members of the North Staffordshire Hunt, held at Trentham Hall, on March 5th, 1889, by the desire of the Marquis of Stafford, M.F.H., a committee was formed in the Eccleshall district, where there is more barbed wire than in any other part of the hunt, with the object of preparing a report of the best way to deal with the wire difficulty. The report was duly sent to his Lordship, and approved of, and at a meeting of the Finance Committee a sum of money was voted for the purpose of carrying out the suggestions.

### Report of the Wire Committee.

It is believed there is no wire used on the following estates, and if there is it will be removed: Keele, Swynnerton, Darlaston, Colonel Chambers', Pirehill, Cresswell, Seighford, Mr. Twemlow's, Maer, Mr. T. Salt's.

There are two or three landed proprietors who have wire on their estates, who expressed themselves desirous to remove it if possible, and are considering what can be done with this object in view.

The members of the committee called upon about one hundred farmers in the Eccleshall district outside of these estates, and it gives them great pleasure to be able to say that in every case they were received with both kindness and courtesy.

Twenty-four of the above do not use wire, and do not intend to do so.

Eighteen cannot do without wire in summer, but will remove it when hunting begins.

Twenty-four cannot do without wire, summer or winter, unless other fencing is provided.

All the others called upon are agreeable to have the wire replaced by rails and posts at the cost of the Hunt, and some would put them down themselves.

All are agreeable for wickets to be erected in their fences at the cost of the Hunt.

All those who cannot do without wire summer or winter are willing to leave six or eight yards in each fence jumpable and free from wire, and will put up two poles to indicate the place if they are supplied by the Hunt.

### Suggestions with a View to mitigate the Evil as much as possible.

The committee suggest that every opportunity should be taken to discourage the putting up of more wire in future by either landlord or tenant.

The committee are of opinion that the remedy of giving or putting down rails and posts by the Hunt to replace the wire would be too costly if carried out generally. This applies also to wickets. Still, both might be applied with advantage to some extent in certain places. The former might be erected, in certain fences where the wire cannot be done without, for about three or more yards, which would enable the Hunt to get over, and leave the other part of the fence wired as it is.

The opinion of the committee is that the simplest and cheapest mode of dealing with the matter in a general way is by getting the farmers to leave six or eight yards free from wire in each fence, and erect poles to indicate the spot free from wire in the hunting season, where wire *cannot possibly be done without*.

The committee would propose that the Hunt should decide upon the remedies to be carried out in various cases and parts of the district, and that a fund should be raised for the purpose, and parties appointed in different parts of the district to carry out the same.

The committee are further pleased to report that they found no trace of a desire on the part of the farmers to discourage hunting in any way; but quite the reverse, and several expressed themselves pleased for hounds to cross their farms when the gentlemen of the Hunt showed proper consideration by doing as little damage as possible.

(*Signed*) R. D. Garde.
E. J. W. Wood.
Robt. S. Wilkinson.
Hy. Cooper.
Richard Boote.

The season of 1890–91 was decidedly below the average of the North Staffordshire Hunt for sport, and was summed up by S. Dickins in his diary at the end of the season as "the worst on record." Still, it must be a downright bad season indeed that does not produce some good gallops; and we shall find, as we study the local records, that even this gloomy season did occasionally provide sport for the ardent followers of hounds in North Staffordshire.

The following extracts are from Dickins's diary:—

"*November 3rd*, 1890. *Woore.*—Found at Canridden. Ran to Pipe Gate, and lost. Found another in Mill Hay. Ran a ring to ground in Canridden. Went to Buerton Gorse. Found. Ran by College Fields and Buerton village, away to Hankelow, and on by Broomlands to Doddington, through and on to Wybunbury, and stopped hounds at dark."

On November 7th Dickins has this rather unique entry: "Meet was at *Shallowford House.* Went there, but did not hunt because of the *big storm.*" The writer does not remember what this refers to, but it must have been pretty bad to stop hunting altogether for the day so early in the season.

"*November 12th*, 1890. *Moddershall Mill.*—Found in the Oaks. Ran a ring, to ground in the main earths—not stopped properly. Then went to Draycot; found in Hose Wood. Ran a fast ring, and away to Painsley, to the left by Cresswell as if for Stallington, but bore to the right, and killed at Blythe Bridge. Found another at Cocknage, and ran to New Park, and lost him.

"*December 1st*, 1890. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found a good fox in the osiers at Betton. Ran by the Brand and Norton to Bellaport, and on by Dorrington to Near Wood, and killed him near College Field. Went back to Betton; found again in the New Covert. Ran to Brown Hills, and away by Norton to Bellaport, round to Golling's Rough, and lost him. Drew Golling's Rough, but did not find."

After December 10th a long frost set in, which stopped all hunting with these hounds until January 26th, 1891.

"*January 26th*, 1891. *Woore.*—The first day out after the long frost. Found in Mill Hay. Ran fast to College Field, to ground. Found another in Canridden. Ran into one, and killed; got on another, but did no good—too long gone. Found another at Bellaport. Ran a ring, to ground in a drain; bolted him, and ran him to ground again, so left him. Found another at Buerton Gorse. Ran a ring, and lost. Found another at Adderley Gorse, but did little good with him. Found another at College Fields. Ran very fast for forty minutes, and lost him."

Evidently there was almost an unlimited supply of foxes; but either they were not of the right sort, or scent was wanting, or perhaps a little of both, for, though they had seven foxes altogether during the day in front of hounds, only one of them seems to have afforded anything like a decent gallop.

On Monday, February 2nd, and again on Wednesday, February 4th, 1891, there were several good sporting gallops, of which "Double Snaffle" has fortunately furnished a spirited record in the *Field* of February 7th, as below :—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

On Monday, February 2nd, this pack met at Norton-in-Hales, where a large field turned out. Our first fox was found in Brown Hills, but did not provide much sport, having evidently been headed several times in attempting to get away. He at last broke on the Market Drayton side, and was hunted slowly to the Tunstall Hall Coverts, where we lost him.

In Golling's Rough another fox was soon on foot. He quickly went away on the Highfields side of the covert, and, leaving Highfields House on the left, turned sharp to the right as if for Bellaport, and ran nearly to Norton-in-Hales Station. Here he bore again to the left, and hounds went on at an increased pace to Bellaport. Our fox did not enter the coverts here. Leaving Dorrington Old Hall on his right, it looked as if the noted Canridden Covert was his point, but, leaving this covert one field on the left, he went through the Mill Hay Wood, and over the Woore and Nantwich turnpike road for Finson's Hay Gorse. Making his exit on the Onneley side, he must have been headed here, for he turned short back and went through the gorse again, and away on the Bridgemere side, leaving Checkley Wood one field on the right, crossing Checkley Hall Farm, and going through Shaw's Rough into the Deer Park at Doddington. Hounds carried the line very well through the park. The deer, jumping up in all directions here, must have made Dickins rather anxious about his young ones after the long rest; but hounds never left the line of their fox, and, with Chapel Wood on the right, went away in the direction of Hankelow, bearing round to the left again for Pewit Hall. Still circling to the left and pointing for Chapel Wood, he did not reach that covert, but went to ground by the brookside close by, here ending a very enjoyable day's sport.

Wednesday, February 4th, is, so far, the red-letter day of the season. Sherratt's Wood was the fixture, but, not finding in this covert, a move was made for Fradswell Plantation, where a real good fox was found that provided a brilliant run. Breaking away on the Sherratt's Wood side, and leaving this covert on the right, the line was across the Wetley Brook and past the brickyard near the Bird-in-Hand, and, leaving Garsall Green on the right and Milwich on the left, he set his mask for the Day Hills. From this point he crossed the Uttoxeter and Stone road, and went right through Hardiwick Heath, over the hill, and on as if for Orange Hayes. However, bold Reynard did not enter this covert, but, leaving the Holly Wood on his right, crossed the North Staffordshire Railway near Stoke-by-Stone, and, going over the Stone and Sandon road, made for the canal and river Trent, both of which he swam. The river here being unfordable, the field were compelled to go round by Aston Bridge, after which hounds were viewed in the far distance streaming away over the hill for Yarlet. The pace now began to tell, and it was a case of "Catch them if you can!" Leaving Yarlet Covert on his left, Reynard was here headed to the right by the Yarlet schoolboys, and went straight for Whitgreave, through the osier-bed there, and, making his point Yeld's Rough, this gallant fox was pulled over in the open near Shallowford, the residence of Mr. Boote, one of the oldest and most respected members of the Hunt. Time, an hour and ten minutes without a check, and a ten-mile point. Hounds had the best of this run all through, the field never getting upon terms with them after crossing the river, Dickins just getting up in time to see his hounds race into their fox.

After the obsequies, a move was made for Mr. Sneyd's Gorse at Cold Norton. In this excellent covert, which I am told has never been drawn blank (Mr. Darlington, the tenant farmer, has charge of it, and is the best of fellows), at least a brace of foxes were on foot, and hounds, getting away on the back of one, ran past Cold Norton Farm and over Micklow Grange Farm, down to the North Stafford Railway, which was crossed here; up the Hill to Darlaston Wood, and, leaving this wood and Bury Bank Gorse on the right, went straight through Tittensor Common and Cumbersome Wood. On quitting this covert the line was across Groundslow Farm to Beech Cliff. Leaving Beech Dale to the left, he went over the hill, and led the field, which at this period was reduced to "a select few," merrily down the valley to Clifford's Wood, where he got to ground. Time, forty-five minutes, with only one slight check.

Double Snaffle.

Dickins's short account of the Sherratt's Wood day is as follows :—

"*February 4th*, 1891. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Found a good fox in Fradswell Heath. Ran fast to Sherratt's Wood, and to the left by Day Hills and Milwich up to Hardiwick Heath, down by Orange Hayes, over the North Staffordshire Railway, canal, and river, up over Yarlet Hill, past Whitgreave, and killed him near Shallowford. One hour and ten minutes. Found another in Mr. Sneyd's Gorse. Ran him to Darlaston, over Tittensor Chase, up through Beech Dale, to Clifford's Wood to ground."

On February 10th, from Moddershall, there seems to have been a fair day's sport, which is thus related by Dickins in his diary :

"*February 10th*, 1891. *Moddershall Mill.*—Found in Moddershall Oaks. Ran a ring to ground. Got on another. Ran to Spot Acre, and lost. Found again in Black Lake. Ran fast to Moddershall, and over to Hartwell to ground; got him out and killed him. Drew Grange Wood blank, but found at Leacroft Sprinks, and ran by Saverley Green to Draycot Woods, and on to Sherratt's Wood. Stopped hounds. Dark."

On Monday, February 23rd, 1891, the meet was at *Ridgwardine*, and the day's sport is thus recorded in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of the same week:

### THE NORTH STAFFORD HOUNDS.

On Monday the meet was at Ridgwardine for the first time in the memory of man. "Richwardine" was the meet as generally announced, and it is affirmed that this is the ancient way of spelling the name of the little hamlet. However, be it as it may, Ridgwardine was the *venue* on Monday last, and from there we had a long journey to Baker's Gorse, or Corbet's Gorse, as is the name by which it is more generally known. A fox was on foot directly, and, contrary to the habits of the foxes in this part, broke away without dwelling, and rattled off at a rare pace in the direction of Woodhouse Lane, thence, skirting the cover at Buerton Gorse, was lost through scent suddenly failing. Close by, another fox made his appearance as he jumped out of a pit-hole, and, hounds being put on his line, made off for Woore, and, passing Gravenhunger, came to grief just beyond, scent again failing. From there we retraced our steps to Bellaport, and here we had a plethora of foxes, a brace going away together, one of which ran to ground at Norton Wood, and the other, after trying several dodges, lay down in a pit-hole on the Brand Farm. From this he was viewed away, and led his field to Bellaport and on to College Fields, doubling back again through Bellaport and past Norton Wood and on to Betton Covers, when he was lost, after running through the Glade Wood on the way to Ridgwardine. Brown Hills cover was next tried, and, as is always the case upon the estate of that staunch fox-preserver, A. W. Radford-Norcop, Esq., gave favourable promise of sport. A brace were soon afoot, with one of which the hounds got away upon excellent terms, and away they went past Betton Coppice and Ridgwardine and on for Golling's Rough. Skirting the cover without entering, off he went for Swanbach, and across both railway and canal he made, and away into the South Cheshire country, and at length he was lost near Haywood, scent being fickle throughout, and so finished a far from uneventful day. Among those present were the Marquis of Stafford, the Marchioness of Stafford, Miss Davenport, Mr. H. R. Corbet, M.F.H., Mr. Ker-Colville, Mrs. Ker-Colville, Sir George Chetwode, Bart., Lady Boughey, Mrs. Dobson, Miss Cartlich, Miss Evelyn Tayleur, Mr. Stanley Hincliffe, Mr. Dobson, Mr. Cartlich, Mr. Reginald Wood, Mr. Peake, Mr. F. R. Twemlow, Mr. D. Eardley, Mr. J. D. Eardley, Mr. J. Bourne, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. W. Blockley, Mr. Woolley, Mr. W. Eardley, Mr. Furnival, Mr. Beech, etc.

On March 16th there was a really good day's sport from Highfield House, with two good straight gallops, the only drawback being that hounds did not get their reward with either fox, though they richly deserved it.

Fortunately, again "Double Snaffle" has contributed to the *Field* a capital account of the day, which we venture to reprint. From the *Field*, March 21st, 1891 :

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

After the recent bitterly cold winds, a fine, mild morning, preceded by a day's rain, and with a rising barometer, no doubt accounted for the very large field that mustered at Highfields on Monday, the 16th inst., including a large contingent of Cheshire gentlemen, and the usual complement of sporting farmers in the district. The elements were at last in favour of a good day's sport, and a very general remark was, "There ought to be a scent to-day!" We were not disappointed. Hounds had not been more than five minutes in Mr. Corbet's gorse before a holloa on the Highfields side informed us that a fox had gone away. The bitches were soon out of covert and streaming away in the direction of Golling's Rough. Leaving this covert on the right, hounds rattled their fox along at a great pace as if for Betton, and on the left of Norton Wood and Cobscot the line was close up to the Glades, where Reynard turned sharp to the left near the Norton and Adderley road, and, running for some distance parallel with the North Stafford Railway, went on straight for Bellaport, a favourite line with foxes on this side, and over a fine bit of galloping country well known to most followers of the Hunt this season, and including several trappy fences—one with a wide ditch on the landing side, which to-day accounted for a few empty saddles. Leaving Bellaport Hall on the left, the little ladies seemed to race on, if possible, a little faster than before, down the hill for Bellaport Wood. Reynard did not enter any of the coverts here, but went direct for Bearstone, leaving Bearstone Wood on the left, and crossing the North Stafford Railway at this point, where hounds soon after checked for the first time on the plough; but, Dickins hitting off the line almost directly, away we went again, crossing the Bearstone and Norton road, and fording the river Tern at Bearstone Mill. Here, after crossing the Woore and Market Drayton road, and leaving Winnington and the Rough Carncoe on the right, hounds drove him along at top speed over the big grass fields at Willoughbridge, through the Deercote and into Willoughbridge Park, where he did not linger a moment, as hounds were away on the bottom side of the covert before the leading horsemen could get through, and, sticking well to their fox over a couple of dry ploughs, went on by Park Cottage and Hunger Heath. Leaving the Wellings on his right, it was now pretty evident that Maer Hills was the point of this good fox. Entering the Black Brook Bogs from this side, a holloa in front over the road near Maer took most of the field round, but hounds hunted the line through the bogs and brought it up to the Berth Hill, where our fox was seen to enter dead beat, and only two minutes in front of hounds. A holloa on the Maer Hall side, however, brought Dickins off the line of the hunted fox, and, returning again to the Berth Hill, hounds could make nothing more of it. Our fox must have got to ground here, or gone on into the hills. This was a most enjoyable gallop, very fast up to Bearstone (thirty-seven minutes), and pretty hunting right through—a seven-mile point, and about nine miles as hounds ran. Time, fifty minutes.

Lord Stafford then ordered a move back to Buerton. Hounds had scarcely got into this covert when a fox was seen to go away from a pit-hole close by, and, Dickins getting the bitches quickly on the line, they went away on the College Fields side, which covert was left on the right. Crossing the Woore and Audlem road near Buerton Hall, and running within one field of the Three

Brooks, our fox went into the Mill Hay, through this covert, and, skirting Admiral's Gorse, the line was carried on to Pewit Hall. From this point he bore to the left, circling round by Buerton Mill and Buerton village, and, recrossing the Woore and Audlem road, set his mask again in the direction of Buerton Gorse; but, leaving this covert some distance on the left, hounds drove along at a nice pace up to the small gorse covert near Mr. Kellock's house at Highfields, where we had met in the morning. Scent here failing, he was given up after affording a good run of nearly an hour, and terminating a brilliant day's sport.

DOUBLE SNAFFLE.

The season ended with a poor day's sport at Ashley on April 8th, 1891, the concluding words of Dickins's entry being, "A very bad scent. Last day of the season. Worst on record."

We have already mentioned the long frost which stopped all hunting between December 10th and January 26th. The hounds were out altogether for cub-hunting and regular hunting eighty-three days. Forty-nine foxes were killed, and thirty-eight run to ground.

The subscriptions for 1890–91 amounted altogether to £2862, of which £400 was set apart for the Covert and Poultry Fund.

At a general meeting of the members of the North Stafford Hunt, held at Keele Hall, on February 26th, 1891, Mr. Ralph Sneyd was, at the instance of the Marquis of Stafford, appointed joint Master with Lord Stafford.

At the same meeting a resolution was unanimously passed that £10 should be "the minimum subscription to the Hunt Fund, subscriptions of less amount being considered as subscriptions to the Covert Fund only, and that £5 should be the minimum subscription to the Covert Fund from all gentlemen hunting with the North Stafford Hounds; subscriptions of less than £5 to be received only from gentlemen who do not hunt."

The following instructions as to earth-stopping in the North Stafford Hunt were issued about this time by order of the Master, and as they appear to be of real interest and value, the writer has thought it better to give them further publicity by printing them in this volume :—

"All farmers, keepers, labourers, and others whose names are down in the huntsman's book as being responsible for earth-stopping receive 15*s.* each for showing foxes.

"Not more than 15*s.* is given to each man during one day.

"If a regularly used earth which in the judgment of the huntsman should have been stopped has been left open, the earth-stopper is fined 10*s.* for every such case.

"It is desirable that the man who does the earth-stopping should get the rewards for showing foxes, and from this will be deducted the amount he loses by carelessly leaving his earths open.

"If trouble is taken to stop the earths at the proper time, viz. between 12 and 2 in the night, the earth-stopper can earn a considerable sum of money by the end of the hunting season.

"Those having charge of large covers can more easily show foxes than those who look after the smaller ones, although it should be remembered the former have more earths to put-to.

"The Master and huntsman together carefully consider each individual case at the end of the season, and the more trouble an earth-stopper may have taken the larger will be his reward.

"If an earth-stopper should not receive his proper warning at least two days before the hounds meet in his district, he should at once let the huntsman know, otherwise he may lose his reward through no fault of his own.

"The earth-stoppers will understand that they are paid by results, *i.e.* the man who takes the most trouble will get the largest reward.

"It is most important, in order to show foxes, that earths should be stopped in the NIGHT and NOT in the morning, and the earths should be unstopped in the evening, after the day's hunting is over.

"If a head-keeper gets the whole of the money for showing foxes, he is expected to divide a fair share with his under-keepers.

"Earth-stoppers, when putting the earths to, should not disturb the coverts more than they can help, as this often frightens foxes away just before the coverts are drawn."

# CHAPTER XIII.

DEATH OF MR. R. BOOTE—SPORT IN 1891–92—MR. R. BOOTE AS A TYPICAL NORTH STAFFORD FOX-HUNTER—LORD STAFFORD SUCCEEDS TO THE DUKEDOM—RUNS IN 1892–93.

In the summer of 1891, the Hunt sustained a serious loss by the death of Mr. Richard Boote, of Shallowford House, who was not only one of the joint honorary secretaries to the Hunt since the year 1887, but for nearly fifty years he had been one of the most keen and bold riders in the Hunt, and one of its most staunch and genial supporters. We shall have another opportunity of referring to his connection with the Hunt, and here the writer will only say that he shared to the full the general regret at the loss of so thorough a sportsman and so good a friend to the Hunt.

At the first general meeting of subscribers held after this event, at the Stoke Hotel, on October 9th, 1891, the following resolution was proposed by Mr. J. W. Philips, seconded by Lord Stafford, and carried unanimously :—

> "That this meeting expresses its sincere regret at the death of their late valued secretary, Mr. Richard Boote, and desires to record its great obligations for the very successful and most disinterested manner in which he worked as hon. secretary in the interests of the Hunt, and tenders to his family its deepest sympathy and condolence."

At the same meeting Mr. R. N. Wood was elected to the office of joint hon. secretary with Mr. A. Simpson in succession to the late Mr. R. Boote.

A meeting of the North Stafford Hunt Committee was also held at the same place and on the same day with reference to questions of disputed boundary between the North Staffordshire Hunt and the Meynell Hunt, when Mr. Philips proposed and Lord Stafford seconded the following resolutions for the consideration of the Meynell Hunt Committee, viz. :—

"1. That the coverts in dispute, *i.e.* the Hopton and Salt coverts on the north-west of the Weston and Stafford road, be neutral between the two Hunts, and that no other pack but the Meynell and North Stafford be permitted to draw these coverts.

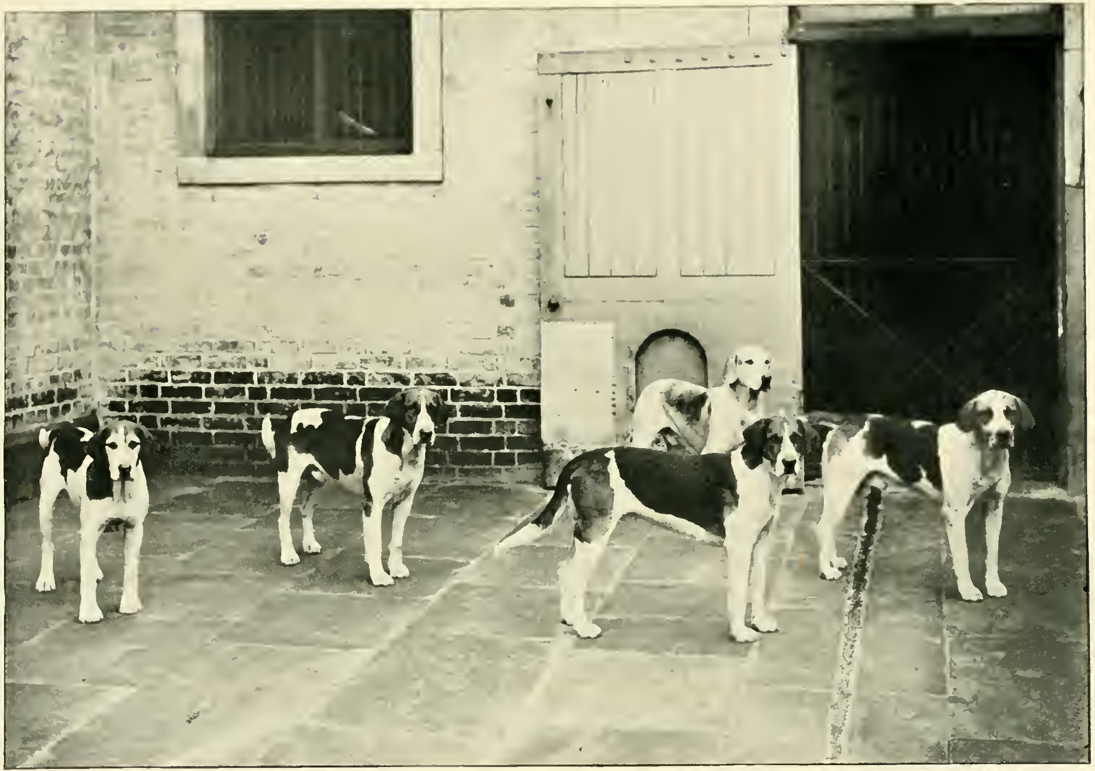
"2. That Fradswell Heath on the Chartley side of the Bearsbrook and Gayton road be considered a Meynell covert.

"3. That Birchwood Park be a neutral covert between the two Hunts."

Another meeting of the North Stafford Hunt Committee was held on December 2nd, 1891, with reference to the Meynell boundary question, when a letter of November 14th from the secretary of the Meynell Hunt was read, agreeing to the resolutions Nos. 2 and 3 proposed by the North Stafford Hunt Committee, but in reference to resolution No. 1 the Meynell Hunt Committee declined to entertain it. There was a suggestion afterwards made to refer the question to the committee of the M.F.H. Association at Tattersall's for arbitration, but ultimately Lord Bagot and Captain Duncombe were appointed to act for the Meynell Hunt, and Mr. J. W. Philips and Mr. R. N. Wood for the North Stafford Hunt, and these gentlemen met at Uttoxeter on August 15th, 1892, and settled the controversy by entering into the following agreement, which was signed by the four gentlemen above named :—

"That the boundary between the two Hunts, commencing at Stafford, should be the Great Northern Railway to Weston, from thence to follow the road to Gayton, leave Fradswell Hall on the right by Coton cottage to Croxton's Lodge, Birchwood Park. That both Hunts should draw Birchwood Park and Fradswell Heath, but must arrange to do so alternate months, the cub-hunting to be done by the Meynell Hounds, who will also have the choice of months. That the poultry claims connected with Birchwood Park and Fradswell Heath be settled by the Meynell Hunt, the amount paid to be divided with the North Stafford at the end of each season."

For the season 1891–92 satisfactory financial arrangements were made, and the requisite guaranteed amount was again assured to Lord Stafford, who was once more assisted by Mr. R. Sneyd, of Keele Hall, as joint Master.



"CLOISTER." "HAZARD." "CHIMER." "FACTOR." "RINGWOOD."

*From a photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

The season of 1891–92 was not remarkable for sport, though rather better than its predecessor, and once more hunting was seriously interrupted by a long frost in January and February.

The following are extracts from Dickins's diary :—

"*November* 30*th*, 1891. *Madeley Village.*—Drew Wrinehill blank. Went on to Checkley Wood; found. Ran a couple of fast rings round Wrinehill, Barr Hill, Onneley, etc., and killed at the Greaves Farm. Time, one hour and ten minutes. Drew Finson's Hay; did not find. Found in the Bitterns. Ran up to Barr Hill to ground.

"*December* 9*th*, 1891. *Stoke-by-Stone.*—Found in Orange Hayes. Ran a ring and lost him. Found three foxes in Hardiwick Heath. Ran some time in covert and killed. Drew Lodge Plantation and Cotwalton Drumble, but did not find, but found a good fox in Moddershall Oaks. Ran to Rough Close, and up through Black Lake to Stallington Grange, on over the North Stafford Railway by Caverswall to Dilhorn, and stopped hounds at dark.

"*December* 11*th*, 1891. *Fair Oak.*—Found in Bishop's Woods. Ran fast by High Offley to Wincote Wood, and lost in a snowstorm. Found another in the osier-bed at Copmere End. Ran to Wincote Wood and Johnson Hall and back to Sugnall, on to Blackwater and Charnes to Chatcull and Standon, and lost him near Mill Meece through having to stop hounds at the railway. One hour and fifteen minutes."

After this a long frost set in and interfered greatly with hunting, so that there is not much to record until quite the end of January.

"*January* 29*th*, 1892. *Bearstone Mill.*—Went to Oakley to draw. Found, and ran a ring by Norton-in-Hales and back to Oakley and Tunstall, and lost him. Found another at Oakley. Ran to the Folly, and lost. Found another on Ashley Heath. Ran to Forty Acres and Broughton Birches into Burnt Woods, and killed him. Found another in Burnt Woods, but did no good.

"*February* 26*th*, 1892. *Seighford.*—Drew Seighford blank, but found in Walton Gorse. Ran fast back by Ellenhall to Seighford, and lost near Great Bridgford. Found another in Yeld's Rough. Ran by Hilcote to Brockton, and lost in a thick fog: could not get to hounds for wire. Did not draw again.

"*March* 23*rd*, 1892. *Stoke-by-Stone.*—Found in Orange Hayes. Ran two rings and lost him. Then drew Moddershall blank, but found in Black Lake. Ran to Moddershall and Spot Nurseries, over Stallington Heath by the Hall to Leacroft Sprinks and Hose Wood at Draycot; through it and on to Sherratt's Wood, and killed him. One hour and five minutes."

The season ended on April 4th with a moderate day from Madeley village, Dickins entering in his diary, "should have hunted later, but ground too dry." Record for season 1891–92, fifty-five foxes killed, twenty-six run to ground. Eighty-eight days' hunting altogether. Subscriptions for the season 1891–92 were £2564 10*s*., of which £397 were handed over to the Covert and Poultry Fund.

Mr. Richard Boote, of Shallowford House, whose lamented death we have briefly referred to above, was a good type of the North Staffordshire fox-hunter, a bold horseman, and a hard rider to hounds; no one enjoyed the sport more, or saw more of a good gallop, and no one rode with more pluck, or kept his nerve to the last better than he did. He must have been hunting with the North Stafford Hounds, from first to last, for something like fifty years; and though he was over seventy at the time of his death, which happened in the summer of 1891, he rode to hounds with as much pluck and vigour up to the end of his career as the youngest member of the Hunt. From his start, in 1842, he had been a hard-working man of business, at the head of a well-known establishment at Burslem, renowned for its manufacture of Parian and earthenware and encaustic tiles; and his two or three days a week with hounds came to him as a most enjoyable holiday, no member of the Hunt entering into the fun with more zest. He was not one of your luxurious sportsmen, with two or three horses out on the same day, but he always managed to see sport, and to get to the end of a run with his one horse at least as well as most of the field, and he liked a gallop all the better when he saw others going as well as himself; he was a genial sportsman, popular with members of the Hunt of every degree, and his loss was much regretted. He had some good horses in his time, notably Marquis, The Baron, Lord Randolph, and The Bishop, on all of which he distinguished himself in many a good gallop with these hounds. He was in the habit of saying, "It isn't the horse, it's the man that counts;" and though he applied this to others rather than to himself, yet it had its application in his case, for it did not seem to make much difference to him what his mount was, his place was generally about the same—well in front. He was a very staunch and liberal supporter of the Hunt, and did good service as joint hon. secretary with Mr. Simpson for the last four years of his life, besides giving valuable help on the committee, and in connection with the Covert Fund, all through his long hunting career. He was a downright good sportsman of the olden style, and few better horsemen have been seen in the North Stafford country. One of his strong points was his quick start. The moment hounds gave tongue he was on the alert, and the instant they were off, so was he, knowing well the advantage of shaking off the crowd at the first fence. He was proud of the pack, and when a good thing came off, was in the habit of sending a graphic account of it to the *Staffordshire Advertiser* or the *Field*, under the *nom de plume* of "Pink," many of which we have reprinted in this volume. His firm, which consisted of his brother and himself, were specially noted for their Parian ware, for which they gained a prize medal at the Exhibition of 1851. It may be remarked of the North Stafford Hunt that an exceptionally large proportion of the members are actively engaged in business, the proportion of landowners pure and simple who hunt being, in our opinion, unusually small. It has always seemed to us that something of the geniality and good-fellowship of this Hunt may be due to this cause. Men of business come out hunting like schoolboys out for a holiday, and their good spirits and enjoyment must tell, not only as regards their own pleasure, but also to some extent must affect that of their fellow-sportsmen. We mention this matter here because we consider the late Mr. Boote a typical illustration of our point.

The following fuller account of the day's sport at Fair Oak on December 11th, and another on the 14th at Norton-in-Hales, is taken from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of December 19th, 1891 :—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

On the 11th inst. this pack met at Fair Oak. The Bishop's Wood was the first draw. Found almost directly hounds were put into covert, and, after a turn round the big wood, went away on the Eccleshall side at a great pace, leaving Blore Pipe and the Crate Wood, near Sugnall, some fields on the left, and on through Bishops Offley for Lea Knowl and Park Mill. With Horsley on the left, the line was now straight for Wincote Wood; through this cover and skirting Ellenhall Park and Walton's Rough, hounds raced on to Ranton Abbey, in the Albrighton country. Unfortunately a heavy snowstorm came on at this point, and nothing further could be made of him. This was a very quick thirty-five minutes without a check. After half an hour's trot back into our own country, drew the osier-bed near Copmere End, where a good stout fox was found. Breaking on the Horseley Hall side, hounds went fast back to Wincote Wood, where Reynard did not dwell long. Going away on the Johnson Hall end of the wood and through the small cover near the Hall, he bore to the left, and leaving the Wootton and Eccleshall road on the right, went on nearly up to Eccleshall, and, circling to the left, ran almost parallel with the Eccleshall and Market Drayton road, along the valley for Sugnall Hall. Crossing the road here, and passing through the Sugnall covers, he bore to the left, skirting the village of Sugnall, and, with Croxton on his left, went as far as Blackwater. Bearing to the right here, and passing close to Charnes Hall, he made a sharp turn to the right and on straight to Chatcull. Hounds were very quickly out of this cover, and, streaming down the hill, went over the Standon Brook, which was running bank-high, and a fair " yawner " at this point. However, the very " select few " who were fortunate enough to keep with hounds negotiated it safely—one of them with a fall, on the right side. Leaving Standon village on the left, hounds carried the line on to Walford Osier-bed, adjoining the river Meece and close to the London and North-Western main line. It was impossible to get over without going round by the Mill Meece Bridge, and by the time Dickins got round he found hounds checked on the railway. Two trains were in sight, so he had to blow his hounds off as quickly as possible. After a time Dickins recovered the line, and hounds hunted slowly in the direction of Cold Meece but, another storm coming on and scent failing, he was given up. This was a really good run. Time, one hour fifteen minutes from find to finish, without any check until the railway was reached, and about an hour up to this point.

Monday, December 14th, opened with pouring rain and half a gale of cold north-west wind, but later in the day the sun shone, and by the time hounds made their appearance at Norton-in-Hales, punctually at eleven o'clock by the church clock, it was not at all a bad sort of hunting morning, and proved to be so far the red-letter day of the season. A move was made to Betton. Found our first fox in Betton Moss, and ran a ring round Brown Hills, and away fast to Tunstall Hall. Crossing the river Tern above the pool, and the Market Drayton and Loggerheads road below the Red Bull, he went on to Almington village, where we lost him. Afterwards trotted back to Betton. Drew Brown Hills, but did not find, as hounds had taken their first fox through one end of the covert. A fox was, however, soon on foot in Betton Gorse, hounds going away at a great pace past the Brand Hall crossing, the Norton-in-Hales and Adderley road, over the Brand Dairy Farm, and, leaving Norton-in-Hales Station on the right and Bellaport Hall on the left, hounds raced down the hill to the Bellaport Woods. Our fox went right through the Bearstone Wood, emerging on the Woore side, and hounds streamed away over the hill as if for Woore, but, leaving the Canridden on the right, he went on for College Fields Drumble. Skirting this cover and bearing to the left, hounds had now the best of it up to Buerton Gorse. Going through the top end of the cover, Reynard bore to the right and went on to Kynsall Lodge, and, after passing through Mr. Hall's grounds, crossed the Norton and Audlem road, and ran nearly up to Audlem, where he turned again to the left. Crossing the canal, and going through Cocks' Bank cover, the line was carried over the Great Western Railway as far as Adderley village, where the first check took place. Getting on the line again in Adderley Park, and leaving the Hall on the left and Kent's Rough on the right, hounds hunted slowly over the hillclose up to the Shavington Park wall, where scent failed and he was given up. Time, one hour and twenty minutes; the first fifty minutes without a check to Adderley, and over a fine line of country. Hounds richly deserved blood, and would no doubt have accounted for their Betton fox, but Dickins believes we got on to a fresh fox from Bellaport Wood. It was now nearly three o'clock, and every one crying "Content," home was the order.

DOUBLE SNAFFLE.

In the month of September, 1892, Lord Stafford succeeded to the Dukedom on the death of his father, the third Duke of Sutherland, who had been throughout a most liberal supporter of the Hunt. The season of 1892–93 was not above a fair average, but ended early, the spring being exceptionally hot and dry; and, moreover, there was the usual frost in December and January, hunting being stopped altogether for twenty-two days during the two months.

From Dickins's diary:

"*November 7th*, 1892. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in the New Covert at Betton. Ran fast to Tunstall and on to Oakley, where hounds divided. One lot ran on by the brook-side past Norton-in-Hales and Bearstone to Willoughbridge, and killed; the other part ran a wide ring and killed their fox on Napeley Heath. Found another in Canridden, and ran to Bellaport Hall.

"*November 11th*, 1892. *Seighford.*—Found a good fox in the covert near Mr. Eld's house, and ran by William's Wood and away to the Rule Covert in the Albrighton country, and to ground in a drain. Found another in White Hart Covert. Ran as if for Walton, and past Chebsey and Hilcote, on over by the Heamies to the Pillsons to Swynnerton, and on to Tittensor Chase to ground. A good day."

The following report of two good days at Doddington and at Dilhorn, on November 28th and 30th, is from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of December 3rd, 1892:—

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE.

When one reads of the great drawback to sport experienced by many packs for the past fortnight, owing to dense fogs, it is satisfactory to record that these hounds have not been once stopped in November, have had some really brilliant runs, and more than average sport during the month. On Monday, November 28th, the meet was at Doddington, a favourite fixture, and the morning was all that could be desired. The field, in addition to the regular attendance on a Monday, included many Cheshire sportsmen and a large contingent of the sporting farmers of the district. After partaking of Mr. Delves Broughton's kind hospitality, a move was made for the Chapel Wood. A fox was speedily found, and after a short dusting in covert the Master's horn told us that he was away across the park in the direction of Bridgmere. The first obstacle to encounter was a stiffish bit of timber, which was safely negotiated by about a score of the leading horsemen, the inevitable gap coming sooner or later for those who were not of the front rank. The remainder of the field made for the lodge-gate close by. The line was carried just outside the park fence by Hunsterson, with Brown's Moss on the right, all the way to Bridgmere Lodge, where, after crossing the Woore and Nantwich road, our fox turned sharp to the left, and, skirting the bottom end of Shaw's Rough, went on as if for Blakenhall, but, with a right-handed turn, the bitches fairly raced along the brook-side for Checkley Hall. The boggy drain by the brook accounted for several empty saddles here. Our fox now went on straight for Checkley Wood. Emerging on the top side, he was holloaed away by a rustic in the direction of Finson's Hay, but, being headed, Reynard turned back and went into Checkley Wood again lower down. Hounds took the line right through the wood and away, leaving Checkley Hall on the left, where he again crossed the Checkley Brook, and the little ladies, racing up the hill, killed their fox handsomely in the open on the Fields Farm. The pace was very good throughout. Time, forty minutes, without a check. Afterwards we drew Lea Park osiers, where hounds got away close at the brush of their second fox, and, running him almost in view for over a mile, rolled him over in a field on the hillside at Blakenhall. Hounds drew Shaw's Rough blank, but as our morning fox passed through the bottom end of this cover, we scarcely expected to find here. The Duke then gave the order for Woore, and a sharp trot brought us to Admiral's Gorse, which proved blank. In Mill Hay a fox was soon on foot, and, breaking on the top side, crossed the Woore and Audlem road, and went on in the direction of Canridden. Here a section of the field, getting a bad start and viewing hounds in the distance pointing over the hill as if for Bellaport, a favourite line with Woore foxes, made a détour to the left to make up lost ground; but their calculations were this time upset, for Reynard, making a right-handed turn, only skirted the Canridden, and, circling to the right, re-crossed the Woore and Audlem road, going on in the direction of Pewit Hall. Leaving this place on the left, our fox tried the big sand-earths on Pewit Hall Farm, which were fortunately well stopped. Setting his mask now straight for Doddington, he was evidently going to take us a " bee line " there, but some boys coming out of Mr. Noden's farm buildings and viewing our fox, headed him right back for Woore. Hounds now travelled along at a great pace, running almost parallel with the Woore and Nantwich road to the Mill Hay Covert, where we found him. Not dwelling a moment here, hounds were away on the top side, leaving Woore Hall on the left, straight over the Woore race-course for Dorrington Old Hall, where our fox turned sharp to the right as if for Bellaport, but leaving Mr. Colville's coverts on his left and still circling to the right, he went back over the hill for Woore, and hounds, diligently hunting the line of their sinking fox, enjoyed their third repast by the side of the famed Canridden Covert. Time, one hour and forty minutes. It was now four o'clock, and every one very happy and satisfied with the day's sport—a leash of foxes having paid the penalty—home was the order.

On Wednesday, November 30th, the fixture was Dilhorn Hall, the seat of Sir Morton Manningham Buller, a member of an old hunting family and a staunch supporter of the Hunt. Found a good fox in one of the Dilhorn covers. He went away as if for Cheadle Park, but, turning to the right and leaving Cheadle town on his left, set his mask down the valley, and hounds ran on at a great pace for Draycot Cross. The coverts here were to be shot through on the following day. Dickins therefore tried to stop his hounds before reaching the cover, but unfortunately they divided here, six couple going through one end of the cover, and, getting away on good terms with their fox, went on, leaving Tenford Mill on the left over the Breach Farm for Oak Hill Hall, in the direction of Draycot Woods, but after running down to the North Stafford Railway, near Leigh Station, hounds swung to the left, leaving Leigh Church on the right, and ran out of scent near to Checkley village. Time, over an hour, and over a beautiful line of country, the only drawback being that the leading hounds were a long way in front of every one. After getting his hounds together, Dickins put into Mr. Philips's covers at Heybridge, where they refound what was supposed to have been their hunted fox, and soon afterwards killed him.

Double Snaffle.

"*February* 22*nd*, 1893. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Found in Brindley's Wood, but killed in covert. Drew Birchwood Park and Sherratt's Wood; did not find, but found in Bromley Wood. Ran very fast to Stallington and Blythe Bridge, and back to Draycot by Garshall Green to Birchwood Park, down to Field and away to Gratwich, and on as if Kingstone Wood was his point, but turned at Grindley Station to Chartley Park and Fradswell past Sherratt's Wood, and killed near Milwich. Time, two hours and thirty minutes.

"*February* 27*th*, 1893. *Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Wood. Ran by Hatherton Lodge, round over the Park to Shaw's Rough, along the brook to Checkley Hall, crossed the brook and ran up to Betley Road Station, turned to the right, on to Wrinehill, over the railway, and killed at Madeley. Drew Admiral's Gorse and Checkley blank, but found at Three Brooks. Ran fast round by Buerton, College Fields, etc., to Dorrington, on to Norton-in-Hales, and lost near Bellaport Hall.

"*March* 15*th*, 1893. *Draycot Village.*—Found on Draycot Cross, and ran out for Forsbrook and lost. Then drew some coverts round Cheadle and Heath House, but did not find. Then went to Hose Wood. Found. Ran fast to Sherratt's Wood and the Bird-in-Hand to Fulford and Stallington, back to Spot Gorse and a ring into Moddershall, to ground at Idle Rocks.

"*March* 20*th*, 1893. *Woore.*—Drew the Woore coverts blank, but found a fox on a farm at Bridgemere. Ran fast by Three Brooks to Buerton Gorse, on by Golling's Rough to Highfields, round Audlem and Buerton village, and killed. Found another at Bellaport. Ran up to Norton-in-Hales, to ground in a drain. Found another in the Drumble near Golling's Rough. Ran fast by Buerton Gorse and College Fields, and killed near the Canridden."

On March 29th we find this exceptional entry in the huntsman's diary:

"Met at Sherratt's Wood. Very dry and hot. Drew Sherratt's Wood and Brindley's Wood, but did not find, so came home. Not fit to hunt. Not to hunt again unless rain."

There was no rain, so this blank day finished the season. Most of our readers will remember the spring and summer of 1893, which for heat and drought was quite remarkable even amongst the cycle of dry seasons we have had of late years.

Considering the drawbacks, the hounds did well to kill fifty-nine foxes. They were out altogether eighty-seven days, and ran thirty-seven foxes to ground.

The following account of four good days' sport with these hounds in February, 1893, is from the *Staffordshire Sentinel* of that time :—

"'Gorse Covert' writes: On Friday, February 17th, we met at Shallowford House, and after partaking of the hospitalities of Mr. Boote, a move was made for Yeld's Rough, which was drawn blank. Shallowford Gorse also proved blank. Mr. Meakin then informed us that he was almost certain we should find in his gorse at Cresswell. The hounds trotted there, but unfortunately, as soon as they were put into cover, they chopped a fox. Another fox, however, went away at the same time, and the hounds were immediately laid on. They ran as if for Cresswell Hall, but turning away from here to the left, they ran a good pace to Hopton Covert. Here, unfortunately, a fresh fox went away, the hounds getting on his line before they could be stopped. They ran as if making for Salt, but turning away to the right, they ran back nearly to Shallowford. Here, losing our fox, we went on to draw Black Planting. A fox was soon viewed away, and, running him in the direction of Shallowford, we came back again to Pirehill. There we got a view of him. He was evidently one of the hunted foxes of the morning. The hounds soon ran into him and killed him. We then went to Cold Norton Gorse, and finding here ran a few fields to ground in a pit-hole on Mr. Darlington's farm. It being past four o'clock, and every one having had enough, the hounds went home.

"Saturday, the 18th, saw the hounds at Blackbrook, which is not considered a popular meet, as it is generally a woodland day, and means drawing the Maer Hills. But good sport may on occasion be obtained from woodland country, as we discovered. Dickins had no sooner put the hounds into the hills than they found, and, running straight through, went out on the Camp Hill side, and ran for Aston. Here they checked, and, being got together, hit off through line and ran down to the North Staffordshire Railway. Leaving the Bitterns on the right, they ran as if for Wrinehill, but leaving this and Checkley on the right, they ran by Heathcote's Gorse to Bridgmere. Here our fox was viewed just in front of the hounds, and being raced on across the park, he went to ground in a rabbit-hole just as the hounds were about to run into him. The Duke then gave orders to go back to the Maer Hills, which was a good seven-miles draw, but on the way he decided to draw Heathcote's Gorse. Finding a fox immediately, the hounds raced away up wind with him back to the Maer Hills. A few of the field saw the first part only of this run, for their coming into contact with wire in some of the fences completely stopped their chance of living with the hounds. On reaching the Maer Hills, Dickins found his hounds scattered so that they failed to mark into ground where he must have gone. Every one having had enough, the hounds went home, the company very well pleased with two such good days' sport.

"Monday's meet was Madeley village. A fox was viewed at Checkley Wood, and soon went to ground in a drain. Having a terrier with us, he was hunted and bolted. Running back into Checkley, the hounds ran round him as if almost going away on the Doddington side. They ran into him close outside the park. The next draw was at Finson's Hay, and here, unfortunately, soon after the hounds had been put into cover, a fox was chopped. As we did not wish to disturb the Woore cover, the hounds were taken to the Maer Hills, where a fox was found almost immediately. He left this stronghold much in the same way as our fox did on the Saturday, every one thinking we were in for another good run. The scent being bad, and our fox some distance ahead of us, we ran slowly on to Wrinehill. Here the hounds were stopped, as it was getting late. Having left a few couples on the Maer Hills, Dickins went back to get them on his way home.

"Wednesday, February 22nd, was a red-letter day with these hounds. The meet was at Sherratt's Wood, and those few who put in an appearance there were well rewarded. The first draw was Brindley's Wood, where a vixen fox was unfortunately chopped as soon as the hounds had been put into covert. Birchwood Park, Fradswell Heath, and Sherratt's Wood all proved blank. Trotting on to Draycot, Bromley Wood was drawn, where a fox was soon afoot, and going away at the bottom end, pointed for Hose Wood, which he skirted, leaving it on the right, and, crossing the Cresswell road, made for Saverley Green and Lea Crofts below Stallington, and ran on at a good pace as if for Blythe Bridge, but before reaching the point turned sharp to the right and ran back much on the same line. Hounds had their first check close to the Bird-in-Hand; time, twenty-five minutes. Dickins here showed great patience, and, leaving them alone, hounds made their own cast, and hitting off the line ran very fast back by Sharpley Heath and Wetley Brook to Fradswell Heath, and, hunting the line very prettily through this covert, went away as if for New Plantain, but leaving this on the left, they ran fast on to the Rookery Covert above Field. Here our fox tried the earths, which fortunately were stopped. His point from here was to Gratwich, and hounds did not check till the railway was reached near Grindley. Here a little breathing-time was allowed, for which man and horse were truly grateful, while Dickins held his hounds over the railway, and, after making a short cast, lost no time in bringing them back, and getting on his line ran for the Hand Leasows Wood. Here, to the great delight of those fortunate people who had them, the second horses turned up. Running over Chartley Park, he made for the Shaw Gorse, which he skirted, and hounds, taking the line into Cocklands Rough, made as if for Birchwood Park, but leaving this on the right, ran on past Fradswell Heath for Sherratt's Wood. Here the keeper informed us he had viewed the fox, dead beat, just ahead. Pushing on through this covert, the hounds soon ran into this game fox, which they so richly deserved, at a farm at High Park. The distance of this run as the crow flies was close on twenty miles; time, two hours and fifteen minutes. Our only regret was the absence of our noble Master, who would have so thoroughly enjoyed this good day's sport, and the pleasure of seeing his dog-pack hunt their fox in such a persevering manner."

Subscriptions for 1892–93 amounted to £2594 19*s.* £400 were allocated to the Covert and Poultry Fund, and £145 to the Wire Fund.

The season of 1893–94 was not a great one for sport, although the record of kills was above the average, but after the cub-hunting season scent seems to have been uncertain, and not many really good runs are recorded, either in the huntsman's diary or elsewhere. The following are extracted, as usual, from Dickins's diary:—

"*November* 13*th*, 1893. *Madeley Village.*—Drew Wrinehill blank, but found in Checkley Wood. Ran back through Wrinehill to Madeley, by Bomsey Wood and on to Wrenches Wood at Bentley, and stopped hounds. *Too much wire.* Drew Finson's Hay, but did not find. Went back to Checkley. Found again. Ran a ring, but did little good.

"*January* 12*th*, 1894. *Fair Oak.*—Found in Bishop's Woods. Ran by Chipnall to Peatswood and Pelwall, and lost. Found again in Old Springs, and killed in three fields. Found another at Park Springs. Ran to ground in Burnt Woods. Found again at Broughton. Ran a ring, to ground in a drain. Found a fifth fox in Podmore Pool. Ran fast to Chatcull, and lost him.

"*January* 15*th*. *Woore.*—Found in Canridden, and killed in covert. Got away with another, and ran to Bellaport to ground. Found another in Buerton Gorse. Ran to Audlem and Hankelow, on for Doddington, and lost. Found again in College Fields Drumble. Ran by Audlem and Hankelow, over the river to Hall-a-Coole, and away to Wrenbury Station, and stopped hounds at dark.

"*February* 2*nd*. *Loggerheads.*—Went through the Burnt Woods to Hales, but did not find, but found a good fox in Chipnall Wood. Ran through Park Springs into Burnt Woods, through and on to Broughton Birches, away past the Rudge and Ashley village to Bromley. On by Podmore to Standon Rough, over to Chorlton and Hatton Gorse, and lost him at Maer Hall.

"*February* 5*th*. *Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Wood. Ran a ring and killed him. Found another at Birchall Moss. Ran a ring and killed. Found another at Three Brooks. Ran to Broomlands and Hankelow, over the river Weaver, past Broomhall and Hall-a-Coole nearly to Wrenbury, to the left, and killed at Wharf Mill. Time, one hour and twenty minutes.

"*February* 12*th*. *Woore.*—Found in Canridden, and ran to Doddington and lost. Found another in Harrow's Wood. Ran to Canridden and killed. Chopped one in Three Brooks, and one in College Field Drumble. Found another at Buerton. Ran fast up wind to Adderley, round by Audlem and Buerton village, and killed at Buerton Gorse.

"*March* 7*th*. *Great Bridgford Station.*—Found in Cresswell Gorse. Ran by Whitgreave and round to Shallowford Gorse and Cold Norton to Pirehill and Aston, and on to Marston and killed by the river. Fifty-five minutes. Found another at Marston Wood. Ran two rings by Salt and Sandon Bank, and lost near the Great Northern Railway."

The season ended on March 31st, rather earlier than usual, owing to the ground being very dry and the weather hot.

Although the season was not remarkable for specially good runs, eighty-three foxes were brought to book (forty-six of them in the cubbing season), thirty-two were run to ground, and the hounds were out altogether one hundred and ten days, being only stopped twelve days through frost. During this season the wire question became more acute than ever in the North Staffordshire country, and several meetings were held on the subject, with the result that a special wire fund was started to defray the cost of taking down wire throughout the Hunt and erecting where necessary timber fencing; and the members of the Hunt were requested to subscribe to this fund in addition to their ordinary subscription.

The Duke of Sutherland headed the list with a sum of £200, and altogether nearly £400 were subscribed for the "Wire Fund." The country was also divided into four districts, and committees were appointed to deal with the wire question in each district, with special instructions to use their utmost endeavour to remove all wire dangerous for riders or hounds by the beginning of November in each year, and where necessary to supply posts and rails. Two of the resolutions read as follows:—

> "Each district to be provided with large-scale Ordnance Survey maps, and the committeeman to tick off each fence with a black and red pencil, the black ticks to denote fences clear of wire, and the red ticks where dangerous.
>
> "That all landowners in the Hunt be requested to insert a clause in their farm agreements preventing the erection of wire by their tenants."

The writer wishes he was in a position to state that these efforts of the noble Master and the Hunt Committee have been attended with the complete success they deserve, but he fears that the wire question is still with us in a decidedly acute form, and that we are not likely to hear the last of it at present. It is not much of a consolation to say that we are not worse off than most of our neighbours in other hunting countries, but such we believe to be the case, and it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that the wire nuisance is likely in the near future to be one of the great hindrances to the national sport of fox-hunting in this country.

Subscriptions for 1893–94 amounted to £2151, and £400 were allotted to the Covert and Poultry Fund.

The season of 1894–95 has not a very brilliant record. The fates were against hunting in the way of weather and scent, and there was an exceptional amount of frost and snow, stopping hunting altogether for thirty-one days throughout the season.

The following are the best runs recorded in Dickins's diary:—

"*November* 14*th*, 1894. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Found a good fox in Sherratt's Wood. Ran him very fast by Draycot Gorse and Hose Wood, away by Fulford and Cross Gate, and on by Spot Gorse and Hilderstone, on to Peat's Hill Wood to ground. A capital forty minutes. Went back to Draycot, but did not find again.

"*December* 12*th*, 1894. *Moddershall Mill.*—Found in Moddershall Oaks, and ran to ground in covert. Found another on Stallington Heath. Ran to Black Lake, and away to Newstead Wood and Barlaston, and killed at Hartwell Hall. Time, one hour and fifty minutes. Found again in Kibblestone Gorse, and ran rings till dark.

"*December* 19*th*, 1894. *Hilderstone Hall.*—Drew Hilderstone, but did not find, but found a good fox in Brindley's Wood. Ran down to Leigh Station, to the left away to New Close Sprink, through Hose Wood, over by Hilderstone Hall, and away to Peats Hill Wood and all down Cotwalton Drumble to the Hayes, and killed at Kibblestone. A capital hour and twenty minutes all up wind. Hounds had the best of horses all through.

"*December* 22*nd*, 1894. *Blackbrook.*—Went to Willoughbridge to draw. Found in the Bogs, but did no good. Went to Bromley, but did not find. Found a brace in Clayholders, and ran over by Chorlton to the Quarries to ground. Did not draw again. *The day of the great gale.*"

The present writer has referred to his own diary of this date, and finds it recorded as a very stormy day and most destructive to telegraph posts and wires.

"*December* 28*th*, 1894. *Great Bridgford Station.*—Found in Cresswell Gorse. Ran near Yarlet Hill and down to Aston to ground. Found another in Shallowford Gorse, and ran by Pirehill to Aston, to ground in a drain. Drew Cold Norton Gorse, but did not find, but found in Yarnfield Osiers. Ran a ring round Darlaston and back to Yarnfield, and away by Swynnerton, to ground in Beech Cliffe."

A long frost set in after this, which lasted right through January and February, with the result that hounds were only out once for hunting during those two months, and then Dickins puts on record that it was "not fit to ride," though they contrived to kill two foxes.

"*March* 18*th*, 1895. *Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Wood. Ran a ring and killed. Found another in Shaw's Rough. Ran fast by Bridgemere and Chapel Wood, to ground at Walgherton. Found another at Three Brooks. Ran by Finson's Hay and Woore to Pipe Gate and Aston Cliff, and lost him. Found another in Admiral's Gorse. Ran by Canridden to Bellaport and lost him.

"*March 25th*, 1895. *Madeley Village.*—Found in Wrinehills. Ran a ring over the railway and back to Onneley, to ground in a drain. Found another at Checkley Wood. Ran by Bridgemere to Buerton, and lost in a storm. Found another in Adderley Gorse. Ran fast by Buerton to Woore and lost.

"*March 27th*, 1895. *Norton Bridge Station.*—Drew Yeld's Rough and Walton Gorse, but did not find. Then went to Sugnall. Found and killed in covert. Got on another. Ran fast to Brocton to ground. Found again in a rough meadow at Bowers'. Ran by Swynchurch to Bromley, and into Maer Hills. Hounds ran away from everybody. Do not know if they killed or not.

"*March 30th*, 1895. *Maer Hall.*—Found on Berth Hill. Ran a ring, but found it a vixen, so stopped hounds. Then went to Bromley. Found. Ran a ring, and away by the Coombes to Broughton Birches and into Burnt Wood, and over into Bishop's Woods and killed in the middle of the wood. Fifty minutes.

"*April 8th*, 1895. *First Milestone, Market Drayton Road.*—First drew Peatswood, but did not find, but found in Chipnall Wood, and ran to the Spoil Bank and stopped hounds. Went back to Burnt Woods. Found, and ran to Oakley and lost. Went to Tunstall. Found in the Rough. Ran very fast by Betton Moss and the Glades to Cob's Cot and Golling's Rough, through and away to Hankin's Hayes and College Fields on to Canridden, to ground in the main earth. Thirty-five minutes."

The season ended on Saturday, April 13th, with a poor day's sport at Swynnerton Old Park. Plenty of foxes, but no scent. The record was a poor one, and no wonder, seeing that hunting was stopped for about ten weeks in the best part of the season. Thirty-seven foxes were killed, thirty-nine run to ground; eighty-six days hunting altogether. Subscriptions for 1894–95 were £2116 18*s*., of which £317 6*s*. 6*d*. were appropriated to Poultry and Covert Fund.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### DEATH OF STEPHEN DICKINS—WOORE AND NORTON MEETS—SKETCH OF STEPHEN DICKINS AS A HUNTSMAN—W. BOXALL—SEASON 1896–97.

The season of 1895–96 was a very fair season indeed for sport, but unhappily it was a sad time for the North Stafford Hunt, for on February 4th, 1896, poor Stephen Dickins died after a very short illness, to the great regret of every member of the Hunt. A better huntsman never carried the horn, and a more honest, faithful official never served under any M.F.H.; but we shall have occasion to speak in greater detail of Dickins's career and achievements later on in this history, so that here we only record, with sincere regret, the sad loss to the North Stafford Hunt. The following are extracts from Dickins's diary:—

"*November 6th*, 1895. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Bromley Wood. Ran fast by Field and Leigh to Loxley and back, into Carry Coppice to ground. Time, fifty minutes. Went back to Brindley Plantation. Found. Ran a ring and lost. Found another in Brindley's Wood. Ran several rings round Sherratt's Wood, Draycot, etc., but did not kill.

"*November 16th*, 1895. *Norton Bridge Station.*—Found at Shallowford Gorse. Ran fast by Pirehill and Aston, round under Yarlet Hill to Enson, round by Whitgreave, back over Yarlet Hill, and away to Cold Norton Gorse, and lost him. One hour and five minutes. Did not find again.

"*December 9th*, 1895. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in Brown Hills, and ran to Betton House and lost. Drew Golling's Rough, but did not find, but got on a fox outside. Ran round by Cob's Cot and Norton-in-Hales to Bellaport, round to Buerton Gorse, and away to the Glades and back to Golling's Rough, and nearly to Buerton, and lost him. One hour and thirty minutes.

"*December 11th*, 1895. *Sandon.*—Drew Sandon Wood blank, but found in the Drumble on the hill above Sander's Wood. Ran fast to Hardiwick Heath, and lost him. Did not find again until we got to the Downs Banks. Found, and ran by Kibblestone and Cotwalton up to Holly Wood. Stopped hounds at dark. An unlucky day. Three of the best hounds spoilt over the rock at Kibblestone Hall—Damper, Heedful, Actor.

"*January* 1*st*, 1896. *Sandon.*—Found in Sandon Wood. Ran fast to Hardiwick Heath, and back to Shaw Wood, and lost him. Drew the other coverts at Sandon, but did not find. Went back to Holly Wood. Found. Ran by Cotwalton, over by Spot Gorse and Hilderstone, round by Fulford, then to the right and into Hose Wood, Draycot, through and by the gorse, and lost at Sherratt's Wood.

"*January* 20*th*, 1896. *Madeley Village.*—Drew Wrinehills, but did not find. Found in Checkley Wood. Ran fast to Finson's Hay, past Onneley and Aston Cliff and Radwood up to Maer Hills; changed foxes, and ran back to Barr Hill, and round by the Bittern's back to Maer Hills to ground. Got him out and killed.

"*January* 27*th*, 1896. *The Loggerheads.*" The meet for this day (Monday) was entered beforehand in Stephen Dickins's handwriting, but in Boxall's handwriting we find the following melancholy addition: "*Note.*—Poor Dickins was taken ill out hunting. Came home early. He never came out again."

As already stated, Stephen Dickins died on Tuesday, February 4th. The cause of his death was pneumonia supervening on a chill. He was with difficulty persuaded to go home from the Loggerheads and to hand over the horn to Boxall; but he was suffering much pain, and evidently was quite unfit to remain out. He had every attention, and was under the treatment of two eminent medical men, but all was of no avail, and he succumbed, as mentioned above, about a week after his first seizure. The attendance at his funeral showed the esteem in which Dickins was held, not only by the North Stafford Hunt followers, but by members of the neighbouring Hunts, many of whom were present, while many others sent wreaths. Boxall, who had filled the post of first whipper-in with great success since 1877, was deservedly promoted to the huntsman's place, while S. Dickins, junr. (son of the late huntsman), was promoted to Boxall's place, E. Jones being second whipper-in. For the future we shall quote from William Boxall's diary in giving the record of runs.

"*January* 31*st*, 1896. *Chipnall Mill.*—Found in Burnt Wood. Ran fast through Chipnall Wood; ran to ground in a drain near Hales; bolted and killed. Found in Peatswood. Had a very good run into the Shropshire country, and back through Peatswood, and killed near Pelwall. One hour and twenty-five minutes.

"*February* 14*th*, 1896. *Chipnall Village.*—Found near Cheswardine Hall. Killed on the high-road. The fox could not get over the wire fence. Found again in Chipnall Wood. Hounds ran fast to Borough's Rough (Hales), back to Chipnall Wood, through it nearly to the mill, back by the village through the wood, and ran him to ground in a drain near Hales; bolted him, ran him fast to Borough's Rough, and killed him. Drew Park Springs blank. Found in Burnt Wood. Had a very good run through Oakley Folly to Napeley Heath, by Norton-in-Hales, nearly to Bellaport, back by Napeley, and beat us near Oakley Hall. A good day.

"*March 2nd*, 1896. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew all the Betton coverts blank; also Golling's Rough. Found in Adderley Gorse, which has not failed this season. He went away by Kynsal Lodge nearly to Buerton village, then turned to the right, leaving Buerton Gorse on his right, to College Field Drumble, by Dorrington Old Hall near to the village, back through the Rookery on Woore Racecourse, to Carter's Rough; then by the Manor House garden over the Doddington road to Finson's Hay Gorse, to Checkley Wood, through it to the Brook, then back to Wrinehill Wood; after taking a turn round, the hounds rolled him over in Mr. Wood's field near Wrinehill Hall. One hour and twenty-five minutes.

"*March 25th*, 1896. *Draycot Village.*—Drew Draycot Cross blank. Found in Hose Wood. Had a very good hunt through New Close Sprink, the Gorse, Sherratt's Wood, Fradswell Heath, back through Bromley Wood and the Gorse, to Brindley's Wood, into Birchwood Park, Fradswell Heath, back to Birchwood Park to ground. But hounds got divided into three lots in Birchwood Park; the leading hounds went on with the hunted fox, and killed him in New Close Sprink; two couple and a half ran another fox to ground near the new buildings. A good scent, and a hard day for hounds."

Record for season, seventy-four foxes killed, forty-eight run to ground. One hundred and nine days' hunting altogether.

Subscriptions for the season 1895–96 amounted to £2331 altogether, of which £419 were allotted to the Poultry and Covert Fund.

We extract the following accounts of sport with the North Stafford Hounds in the opening part of the season 1895–96 from the columns of the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 9th, 1895, and December 14th of the same year:—

### THE NORTH STAFFORD.

The opening meet on Monday was at Woore. The hounds arrived from Trentham punctually at eleven. Dickins, the whips, and second horsemen looked very smart in their new liveries, and the pack was noticeable as being in the pink of condition. There was a large field present. The Trentham party included the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, Lady Angela St. Clair Erskine, Miss Chaplin, and Mr. F. Mildmay, M.P. Among others were Sir George Chetwode, Bart., Mr. H. Ker Colville and Mrs. Colville, Captain Stamer, Mr. James Hall, Mr. P. H. Rawson, Mr. W. W. Dobson, Mrs. Ridgway, Mr. James Meakin (Westwood), Captain C. M. Harding (Old Springs), Captain Harding (Almington), Mr. F. J. Harrison, Mr. A. H. Heath, Mrs. Hayes, Mr. A. Simpson (hon. secretary), Mr. E. J. W. Wood, Captain Wood, Mr. J. M. Wood, Mr. Murray-Honey, Mr. W. E. Stamer, Mr. T. Cartlich, Mrs. Guy Knight, Captain Feilden, Major Kearsley, Mr. A. Knowles, Mr. F. G. Mather, Mr. Challinor, Mr. C. E. Challinor, Mr. W. R. Kirkham, Mr. A. Brocklehurst, Mr. J. Tayleur, Mr. W. H. Baddeley, Mr. W. Mould. Amongst hunting farmers were Mr. R. S. Wilkinson (Swinchurch), Messrs. Nunnerley, sen. and jun., Mr. and Mrs. W. Blockley, Mr. W. Wilkinson (Madeley), Mr. Bourne (Heleigh Castle), Mr. C. Whitton, etc. There was a numerous party on wheels, among whom were Lady Chetwode and party (Oakley), Mrs. Harrison (Maer), Mrs. W. E. Stamer (Maer), Mrs. Broughton (Doddington), etc. Directly after the hounds were put into cover a fox was on foot, and soon after "halloas" were in all directions. After bustling foxes about in cover, one went away at the bottom end of the wood, as if for Admiral Gorse, but turning to the left skirted Harrow's Wood and Three Brooks, and leaving Peewit Hall on the left went straight for Doddington Park. After carrying the line into Chapel Wood, where two or three foxes were on foot, hounds got away with the fox on the Hatherton side of the park, but the fox, being headed, came back into the park again. However, another fox was "halloaed" away on the same side, and Dickins, getting his hounds quickly on the line, went away by Hatherton, and with the Broomlands on the right, through Hankelow, crossing the river Weaver, and over the Great Western Railway and Shropshire Union Canal; then bearing to the right, went on, leaving the Stick Cover on the right, nearly up to Nantwich, fox being lost near the canal. Found again in Buerton Gorse, and had a fast twenty minutes. On Wednesday the meet was at Bird-in-Hand. A good fox was found in Bromley Wood, went through the gorse, leaving Sherratt's Wood on the right, past Middleton Green, and, crossing the North Staffordshire Railway near Leigh Station, ran parallel with the railway line nearly up to Bramshall, where he turned up to the right and came back by Loxley Park and to ground in Carry Coppice, in the Meynell country. They found in the afternoon in Brindley's Plantation, and ran through Birch Wood Park, but, darkness coming on, the fox had to be given up.

## THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

### A GOOD RUN.

Notwithstanding the counter-attraction of Keele Races, there was a large field at Norton-in-Hales, three miles from Market Drayton, where these hounds met on Monday, including the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, the Misses Chaplin, Lady Angela St. Clair Erskine, Sir George Chetwode, Major Kearsley, Mr. H. T. Barclay, Mrs. Hayes, Mr. Knowles, Mr. Hall (Kynsal), Mr. W. Wolley (Market Drayton), Mr. and Mrs. H. Ker Colville, Captains G. and C. Harding, Mr. Twemlow (Peatswood), Mr. H. R. Corbet (Master of the South Cheshire), Mr. Bertie Corbet, Mr. Dobson, Mrs. Hollis, Mr. A. Heath, Mr. R. Wood, Captain Stamer, Mr. A. Simpson, Captain Wood, Mr. F. J. Harrison (Maer), Mr. P. H. Rawson (the Brand), Mr. Murray-Honey, Mr. Greaves (Hankelow), Mr. Donaldson-Hudson, and Mr. J. Bourne (Mucklestone). The first find was at Brown Hill, but the fox was reluctant to leave the covert, and when at length he did so he crossed the Brown Hill road and ran nearly to Ridgwardine, where he turned to the right and crossed the North Stafford Railway, and at length was run out of scent near to Betton, and the probability is that he had crossed over to Oakley. After several covers had been drawn blank, we trotted to Kellock's Gorse, and directly hounds had passed the covert a fox jumped out of a pit. Hounds were quickly laid on, and ran as hard as they could go over the Hawksmoor and Wem's Wood Farms up to the Glade Wood. Instead of entering the cover, he turned to the left, and ran over the top of the hill nearly to Golling's Rough, where he turned sharp back and made past Norton Wood Farm and the Brand Farm to Norton Railway Station. Then, with a swing to the left, headed for the Rookery at Bellaport, crossed the Bellaport Hall Farm, and ran nearly to Canridden. He now turned back, and, with a left-handed turn, made good his way to Hankin's Hay; then raced right along past Hankin's Hay Farm and on as if for Buerton, through Buerton Gorse, leaving it at the bottom end, and crossed the Woodhouse lane, and so on up to Golling's Rough. The scent now failed, and soon after the fox had to be left. This was a remarkably good run of fully two hours, the pace during the greater part of the time being fast.

We have already briefly referred to the sad loss which the Hunt sustained by the sudden death of their excellent huntsman, which happened early in February, 1896.

With regard to the merits of Stephen Dickins as a huntsman, there can only be one opinion amongst those who have had any real experience of him in the field. We do not doubt that, if you could poll the past and present members of the Hunt, there would be a hearty and practically unanimous vote in his favour. The present writer had fully twenty years' experience of him with the North Stafford Hounds, and he does not hesitate to say that in his opinion Dickins was as good a man for the North Stafford country as you could reasonably expect or wish to see.

Some critics might think he was not quick enough, or brilliant enough, for Leicestershire or Northamptonshire, with their enormous crowds of jealous horsemen and their flying country, though our own opinion is that he would have been bad to beat in any company; at any rate, for the smaller fields and cramped country of North Staffordshire Dickins was undoubtedly the right man in the right place, and in the handling of his hounds in the field, in his riding to them on all occasions, and in his kennel management, we always considered him quite first class. No huntsman is altogether perfect, and perhaps Dickins may have been inclined to draw his coverts too quietly, without as much music from voice or horn as Charles Leedham and Joe Maiden, for instance, were wont to give.

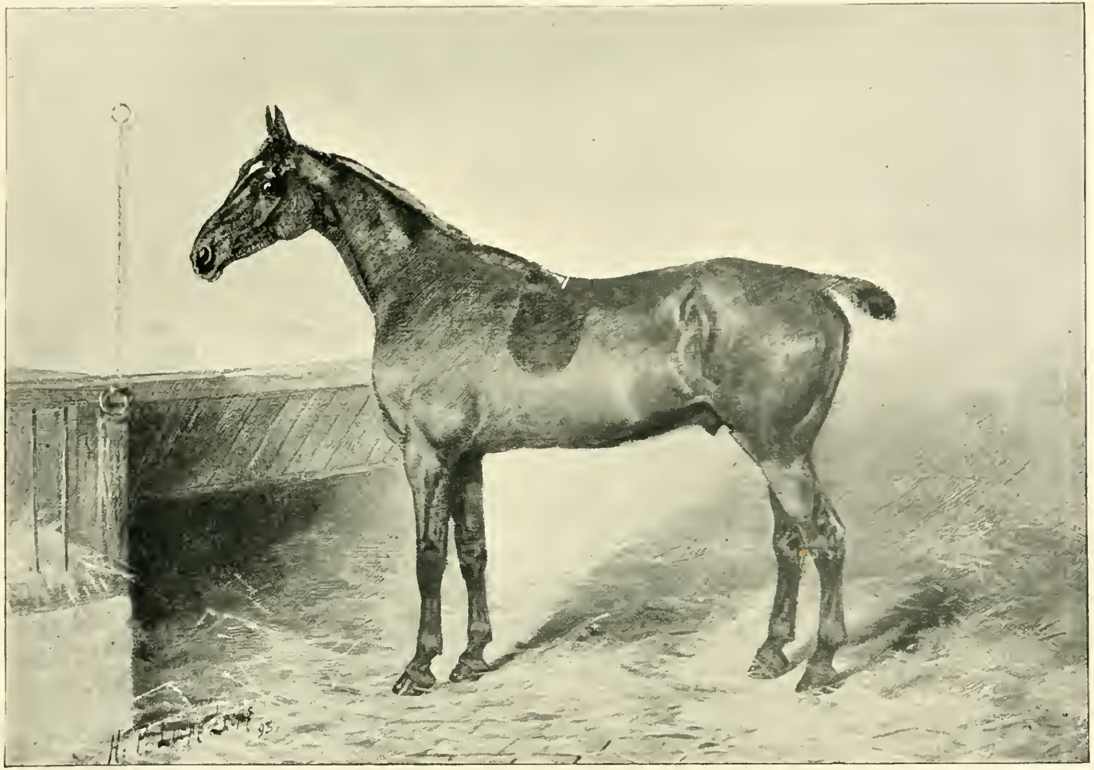
He was also, perhaps, at times a trifle slow in getting from covert to covert to draw afresh; but when we have mentioned these slight defects, we have said about all that there is to say in the way of criticism. Then what a determined, persevering huntsman he was!! With a fox before him, he would never leave him until it was absolutely hopeless to persevere further. No day was too long for him, no fence too difficult, and he was a very glutton for blood. It was a sight to see him with a fox sinking before his hounds, his face flushed with excitement, halloaing his hounds on for all he was worth, and straining every nerve to help them to bring their quarry to book. It was not that he hated the fox, or loved a kill for its own sake, but that he loved his hounds so well that he couldn't bear them to lose their reward if it was anything like within their grasp. The North Stafford country is not an easy country in which to kill your fox, and Dickins's total of one hundred and one foxes killed in a season is, and will probably long remain, a record. He had his fancies, like most horsemen. He would always pick out a place, if possible, close to a tree, where fences were thick and hairy, on the principle that there a rough fence is generally weakest, regardless of the risk of bumping his knee against the trunk; he hated timber, and would always avoid it if he could, and, determined as he was to be with his hounds, he would never ask his horse to do an impossibility, and on the whole he probably lamed as few horses as any hard-riding huntsman ever did. He was a man of few words, with a vein of dry humour, and hated to be talked to until the day's work was over; but he was a very pleasant companion home to the kennels after the day's sport, especially when he had killed his fox after a good gallop. As an instance of his dry humour, we may mention that one day, when the meet was Stoke-by-Stone, the writer rode, as usual, to Orange Hayes, with a view to avoid an extra trot of a couple of miles, and waited by the covert side for something like half an hour without any sign of hounds (this being ninety-nine times out of a hundred the draw from Stoke-by-Stone); then after a long trot to Sandon we caught Dickins with his hounds, and accosted him with—

"I say, Dickins, you *have* given us a stern chase; we've been looking out for you, as usual, at Orange Hayes."

Dickins, without moving a muscle of his face, drily replied, "I thought the card said Stoke-by-Stone."

He was not fanciful about his mounts, but he was usually very well mounted, and always in his place. We have no doubt he had his favourites, such as Reuben, Blackbird, Pioneer, Mischief, or the Marquis—Reuben was an upstanding chestnut horse, which Dickins usually rode in the Draycot country. Mischief carried him well in a fine run years ago from Wincote Wood to Wrinehill; but whatever his mount, he always rode in the same determined style. His devotion to duty no doubt shortened his life, for the last time he came out with the hounds he was evidently much too ill to be out of bed, and was with difficulty persuaded to leave early and to seek the bed which he was destined never to leave again alive. Dickins was most thoroughly liked and respected by every member of the Hunt, and by his upright and conscientious discharge of his duties he had earned and entirely deserved their favourable opinion.

It is satisfactory to know that for his widow and family a handsome sum was subscribed by the members of the Hunt, amounting to nearly £800, the bulk of which is invested in the names of trustees for the permanent benefit of the family. The writer only regrets that he has not the ability to pen a worthier tribute to the memory of so excellent a huntsman as Stephen Dickins, but his merits are well known to all who have hunted with these hounds between 1871 and 1896, and his name will not easily be forgotten in North Staffordshire. The following extracts from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* and the *Field* of February 8th, 1896, will serve to show the general estimation in which Dickins was held, and the deep regret for his loss which was felt, not only by the members of the Hunt, but



"REUBEN."

*From a photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

by all who knew anything of this most excellent public servant.

From the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, February 8th, 1896:

### DEATH OF HUNTSMAN DICKINS.

Sincere regret has been caused among the members of the North Staffordshire Hunt by the news of the unexpected death of the popular huntsman, Stephen Dickins, which occurred at his residence near the kennels, at Trentham, on Tuesday morning. Dickins was last out with the hounds at a meet at the Loggerheads on Monday, the 27th ult., and was then suffering from a chill contracted on the previous Saturday, when the meet was at Blackbrook, in cold, wet weather. He kept with the hounds until his unfavourable symptoms were aggravated, and then reluctantly yielded to persuasion and left the field. On reaching home his condition became worse, and pneumonia eventually set in. He was attended by Dr. M'Aldowie, of Stoke, and subsequently Dr. Arlidge was called in; but despite medical attention and careful nursing, Dickins succumbed to the malady on Tuesday morning. The deceased was the *beau ideal* of a huntsman, in which vocation he was practically reared. His father for many years had charge of the Atherstone Hounds, and young Dickins served his time as a lad in the kennels of Mr. Selby Lowndes, of the Vale of Aylesbury Hunt. He then went to the Atherstone, under Captain Anstruther Thomson, and whipped-in under his father, afterwards succeeding the elder Dickins as huntsman. He had charge of the Atherstone pack for one season, and then transferred his services to the North Stafford twenty-five or twenty-six years ago, when Colonel Nugent was the Master. His connection with this Hunt lasted until his death, and during that long period he gave complete satisfaction to the officials and members. Under his superintendence the pack has been gradually improved, and, invariably being put in the field in the pink of condition, the hounds have gained a capital reputation. Of Dickins's capabilities as a huntsman the members had a high opinion, and by his attention and devotion to the interests of the Hunt the deceased had made himself a highly valued servant. He was an intrepid and clever horseman, and his genial disposition made him a general favourite among the frequenters of the meets. The deceased, who was fifty-four years of age, leaves a widow and eight children. One of his sons is second whip of the Hunt. The funeral took place at Trentham yesterday afternoon, the service being conducted by the Rev. E. V. Pigott, vicar. Amongst those attending were the Duke of Sutherland (Master of the Hunt), Lord Henry Grosvenor, Sir M. M. Buller, Sir George Chetwode, Mr. R. N. Wood and Mr. A. Simpson (joint secretaries), Mr. A. W. Leedham, Mr. H. Ker Colvile, Captain Stamer, the Rev. F. C. Stamer, the Rev. P. E. Mainwaring, Mr. P. H. Rawson, Mr. E. J. W. Wood, Mr. W. W. Dobson, Captain Feilden, Mr. W. Thompson, Mr. T. Cartlich, Mr. A. Boote, Mr. C. W. Clifford, Mr. F. J. Mather, Mr. Blagg, jun., Mr. W. E. Bowers, Mr. C. E. Challinor, Mr. W. Mould, Mr. T. Slater, Dr. J. S. Walker, Mr. J. Coe, Mr. W. B. Hargraves, Mr. J. Q. Lamb, and Mr. G. Swift. There were many beautiful wreaths, including one from the noble Master and members of the Hunt, inscribed "In memory of many hunting days and faithful services." Other floral tributes of esteem were sent by the Duchess of Sutherland, Colonel Bulkeley, Mr. W. W. Dobson, Mr. C. R. A. Birch, Mr. H. R. Corbet (Master of the South Cheshire Hunt), Miss Davenport, Mr. A. Simpson, Mr. J. W. Philips, Mr. E. J. W. Wood, Mr. and Mrs. Colvile, Mr. A. Boote, and the servants on the estate.

From the *Field* of February 8th, 1896:

### THE DEATH OF STEPHEN DICKINS.

We regret to announce the death of Stephen Dickins, a member of a well-known hunting family, who has for something like twenty-five years discharged with every credit to himself the duties of huntsman to the North Staffordshire Hounds. In 1856 the deceased whipped-in to the Atherstone, during the Mastership of Mr. Selby Lowndes, who himself carried the horn, having William Dickins—presumably father to Stephen—as kennel huntsman. On Lord Curzon succeeding Mr. Lowndes, after a few years William Dickins became huntsman, Stephen first whip, and Thomas second whip; and so things went on till 1866 or 1867, when Stephen succeeded William as huntsman, Lord Curzon still remaining the Master. On Mr. Anstruther Thomson taking the country in 1870 or 1871, he, following the steps of Mr. Selby Lowndes, acted as his own huntsman, Stephen becoming first whip and kennel huntsman, and in 1871 he went to the North Staffordshire under Captain Trench Nugent, who then had the country. From that year down to the date of his death Stephen Dickins has been with the pack, through all its changes, and succeeded in showing a good deal of excellent sport, especially in the Woore country. His hounds were always in capital condition, he was popular with the farmers (whose interests he consulted), with his field for the sport he managed to show, and with his employers for his uprightness. The hounds have been kept in kennel till after the funeral out of respect to his memory.

On Dickins's lamented death it was felt by the Master, and cordially endorsed by the Hunt Committee, that Will Boxall, who had been the able and popular first whipper-in since 1877, and who had gained the esteem and regard of the members of the Hunt by his good conduct and fine horsemanship throughout the whole of that period, had well earned his promotion, and when the Marquis of Stafford handed over the horn to Boxall, every one felt that the right course had been taken. No one can deny that Boxall was well bred for a huntsman's post. His grandfather—also named William Boxall—was formerly huntsman to the Warwickshire, and is favourably mentioned, not only in Nimrod's "Hunting Tours," but in the "Annals of the Warwickshire Hunt," by Sir Charles Mordaunt, and the Hon. and Rev. W. R. Verney.

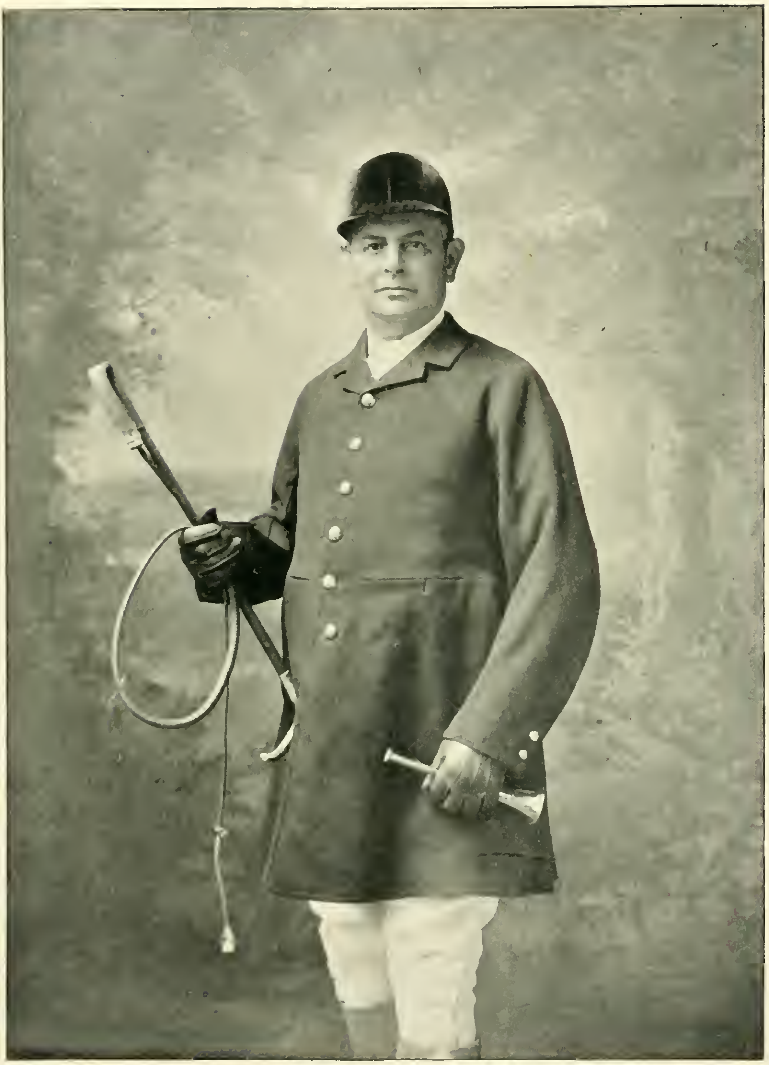
Nimrod says of W. Boxall the elder, who was then Mr. Hay's first whipper-in, "I very much like the appearance of Mr. Hay's first whipper-in, Will Boxall. He abounds in zeal, without which nothing can be done well." In the Warwickshire Hunt book, Will Boxall, who became huntsman in 1830–31, frequently receives honourable mention. On one occasion he is named as one of five who alone saw a fine run in 1833 from Meon Hill, ending with a kill in the open, after an hour and five minutes without a check; and on another occasion in the cub-hunting season, when they had a tremendous gallop and a kill close to Crick, in Northants—a fifteen-mile point—Boxall is mentioned as the only one who started with the hounds and was up at the finish. He is also given great credit for his exertions to show sport, and for the style in which the hounds were turned out. Our Will Boxall's father, whose name was Zachariah, was also bred to hunting, and in his time filled the situation of whipper-in to the North Stafford Hounds under Joe Maiden, and was afterwards with Baron Rothschild and then with Mr. Tailby, etc.

Will Boxall, our present huntsman, began riding as a youngster at Newmarket in 1860, under Godding, the trainer, and stayed there till 1866, when he went to Mr. Chaplin at Blankney as second horseman, and afterwards as second whip for several seasons. In 1877 he came to Trentham as first whip, and has remained with the North Stafford Hunt ever since, having been promoted, as already stated, to the post of huntsman on the death of Dickins, in 1896. Happily the time has not arrived for a critical essay on Boxall as a huntsman, for we sincerely hope and trust that he will live for many years yet to come to wield the horn, and to add to the laurels he has already gained. Moreover, the present writer, having given up hunting for the last eight or nine seasons, has had no opportunity of witnessing Boxall's methods at the head of affairs, and is therefore precluded from offering any opinion; but we may say that if he is as good with the horn as he was in the position of first whipper-in, he ought to satisfy the most exacting sportsman. In his earlier days he won, most deservedly, a great name as a bold and fearless horseman; on several occasions he has been a winner between the flags, and even held his own and came in second in 1873 on Mr. Chaplin's horse Rhysworth, at the Liverpool Grand National, and on the same horse he won the Sefton Cup Steeplechase the next day. On all hands we hear his kennel management most highly spoken of, and any one going over the kennels, and seeing the hounds, can see for himself that this essential department is admirably managed.

We believe Boxall's favourite mounts have been Ruddigore, Ensign, Outfit, and Donnabell, all horses of a very useful stamp, and well up to his weight, which is not out of the way for a man of his age. The writer has had many good enjoyable rides with Boxall for the first fifteen or sixteen years of his connection with the North Stafford Hounds, and desires to speak of him with great good-will as a genial, civil, and deserving official, and, in taking leave of his name for the present, would wish him many years of health and enjoyment in his responsible and honourable position. The writer well remembers Boxall saying at the puppy-judging luncheon in the summer of 1896, on his health being proposed for the first time as huntsman of the North Stafford Hounds, "I am proud of the position, and grateful to his Grace for the appointment. I would not change places with the Prince of Wales."

The following sketch of Stephen Dickins as a huntsman has been kindly contributed by a well-known member of the Hunt, than whom no one is more competent to form an opinion on the subject:—

"In writing of Dickins as a huntsman you might class him in three ways: First, in the kennel; secondly, in the field; and thirdly, as a rider to hounds. To take the first qualification, we should describe him, not as a first-class breeder of hounds, such as Maiden, but, taking him all round, and considering the number of years he was at Trentham, and the support he received from the Master (the then Marquis of Stafford), who spared neither expense nor trouble in the kennel, Dickins produced in his time many useful and valuable hounds, and well adapted for the country. He never forgot to look to the main points, viz. good legs and feet, with good shoulders and stamina. As to music, we might say in this respect his hounds were perhaps a little deficient, judging from a remark once made by a member of the Hunt, for on one occasion when hounds were running hard over the Draycot country, and had disappeared over the top of one of the hills (Dickins riding his best to keep up with them), this gentleman, who was with him, remarked, 'I can't hear them, Dickins;' and he, replying in his short, quick manner, said, 'You should get a bit closer to them, sir.' To those who have hunted much, it is well known that hounds on some days throw



WILLIAM BOXALL.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

their tongues better than on others. Lord Stafford always spoke of Dickins as a most trustworthy and reliable servant, who could in every way be depended on to carry out his wishes in his absence. To illustrate the care Dickins took of his hounds, even after a very hard day he always visited the kennels to see them fed. On one occasion, having clashed with the Meynell in a run, they had to be drafted. Dickins, on arriving home, and making his usual visit to the kennel, discovered he had brought home a Meynell hound, and that one of his had gone to Sudbury. Next day the Meynell hound was sent back to Charles Leedham, with a note asking for his in return; and it was always a joke with Dickins against Leedham that he had not sooner discovered the stranger. This is only one illustration of the care and attention he gave to his work.

"As a huntsman in the field, you might describe him as very nearly top of his profession. All men have their faults, his principal one being that, after drawing a covert blank, he would wait to get all his hounds together. This was all very well, and quite right, after drawing some of the big woods, as hounds may often get left behind, but this occurred even after drawing small coverts. It was the opinion of some that he drew his coverts too quickly, and was rather silent, both with voice and horn. He certainly had not that powerful, musical voice of the late Lord Hill or Joe Maiden, but to those who took notice, and came out hunting for hunting's sake, the notes on his horn were as well known to them as 'Pop goes the Weasel' to the boy in the street. As to drawing his coverts quickly, it depended very much on circumstances; and if it was one as bare as a turnpike road, his hounds would gallop on in front of him to a spot as well known to them as to him where a fox would be lying. You very seldom found him or his hounds drawing over a fox. In casting his hounds he was most persevering, and never liked to give up till he had accounted for his fox. On these occasions huntsmen have their tempers severely tried; but Dickins, if he did lose his temper, seldom showed it. The many fine runs in his time proved the able man he was.

"As a rider to hounds, brilliant as many men are, Dickins could hold his own with all comers. Let hounds run ever so fast, he showed that wonderful art of horsemanship of never apparently being in a hurry, but all the time he was sliding along, and it took a good man to live with him. He had a wonderful knack of getting through the big woods, and a good many who have tried to follow him at this game were glad to find themselves back in a ride, and stick to it. The same may be said of him in the open. He could get over a thick, blind place in a most extraordinary manner, and if it should be a soft take-off, he was quick enough to perceive it, and would jump by the side of a tree, and seemed to forget that he had such a thing as a leg, which never came to grief. Some people remarked that he always avoided timber, and, judging by a story he related riding home from hunting one evening, it is not to be wondered at. When first whip to the Atherstone, they were running a fox over a fine line of country, and the hounds just on the point of killing him, when the fox went to ground in the main earth at Newbold Revel. Some time after, when hounds were hunting in the same country, the same fox gave them the identical run, and Dickins, knowing that the main earth at Newbold was not stopped, left the hounds and made the best of his way over the country, taking the shortest cut. To do this he knew he had an almost impracticable fence to jump, but remembered there was a gap in the corner of this field. To his surprise, on arriving at this spot, he found it made up with a stiff oak post and four rails. Knowing that he was on the back of Mr. Anstruther Thomson's finest timber-jumper, he went straight down to it; but, unfortunately for him, the horse slipped on taking off, and the pair went a real ender into the next field. Dickins, somewhat dazed, picked himself up, and asked a man who was ploughing to catch his horse for him. The man remonstrated, and said he was a great fool to jump at such a place, for it was only yesterday that they had put it up! Anyhow, he caught his horse, and, pursuing his journey, had the satisfaction of arriving at the main earth at Newbold, just in time to stop his friend, whom he saw approaching with his tongue out and dead-beat. This reads like murdering such a good fox, who, if it had not been for Stephen's cunning, would have lived for another day. No wonder after this that he fought shy of timber. During the many years he was with us, he was mounted by Captain Nugent and Lord Stafford on some very good horses, but he always said the two best he ever rode in his life were Blackbird and Monarch.

"How well some of us remember Dickins's last day with the hounds! The meet was at the Loggerheads. He didn't appear at the time to be ill, or suffering pain, but soon after the hounds had started and found a fox in Tunstall Rough, they ran for Peatswood, to ground in a rabbit-hole in a fence. Dickins, coming up soon afterwards, did not get off his horse, as he usually did on such occasions. Mr. Wood (who was in charge, the Duke not being out) asked him if there was anything the matter, and he then stated that he was in such fearful pain he could hardly sit on his horse. Mr. Wood at once requested him to go home, but had some difficulty in getting him to acquiesce. In going down the road to the Folly, Dickins dropped his horn, which is always considered an unlucky thing with huntsmen, and directly afterwards he left hounds and rode home, the hounds going on with Boxall to hunt them. This was the last time Dickins was ever seen by any of us, for as soon as he got home he went to bed and never left it, and died a few days after."

Of this scene Mr. Dobson writes—

"I think one of the most pathetic scenes I ever witnessed out hunting was when Dickins, on the last day he was out, feeling too ill, gave his horn to Boxall and quietly went home. Boxall moved off with the hounds to draw, and as they were jogging along we looked round and missed Dickins, and almost the whole pack started after him."

The season of 1896–97 was Boxall's first complete season with the horn. He began well with a capital record in the cubbing season. Thirty-six days out in September and October, forty-four foxes killed, and thirty-one run to ground. The following are extracts from his diary :—

"*November 4th*, 1896. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found, and ran to ground in Bromley Wood. Drew New Close Sprink, the Gorse, and Sherratt's Wood blank. Found near the keeper's house. Ran on to Fradswell Heath, back towards Hilderstone; then turned back by Sherratt's Wood, and ran the valley between Birchwood Park and Brindley's Long Plantation, up Chartley Park, across that by the Castle, over Chartley Moss to Newton Gorse, and beat us near Newton village. This was a nice hunting run of one hour and twenty minutes, and from Birchwood Park to Newton is all in the Meynell country.

"*November 23rd*, 1896. *Betley.*—Drew Weston Osier-bed and Batterley Bog blank. Found in Mill Dale. Had a very good hunting run, one hour and five minutes, by Whittlesey Brook to Weston, by Betley Hall to Craddock's Moss, and ran him to ground in Bowsey Wood. Found in the Gladdings. Hounds ran very hard for about thirty minutes, and he beat us on the coal-pit banks. Hard day for hounds. This was the first time the hounds met at Betley in regular hunting since 1879. There was a large field out, also a lot of people on foot; the village schools had a holiday, and we had a fair day's sport.

"*November 28th*, 1896. *Cold Norton.*—Found three foxes in the Gorse; killed one and had a very nice gallop with another. He went towards Black Plantation, bore to the left to Walton Heath, through Micklow Gorse, along the side of the North Staffordshire Railway, over the high ground below Cold Norton, through Mr. Ball's osier-bed, by Shallowford Gorse, and beat us near Whitgreave. Drew Shallowford and Cold Norton, but did not find. Yarnfield osier-bed also proved blank. Found and killed in the fox covert. Found in the Pilsons. Stopped the hounds near Mill Meece owing to wire. Drew Hatton Bogs blank. Found in Swynnerton Old Park. Stopped the hounds near the Lime-pits, late in the day. This was our fiftieth day's hunting this season, and hounds killed their fiftieth fox.

"*December 14th*, 1896. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in the Brownhills. Had a very fast run with a ringing fox, and killed him near Betton. Found a brace in Wordsley Wood. Ran very nicely through the Glades to Golling's Rough and back; then towards Norton Station, but gave him up owing to Mr. Colville going to shoot the next day. Found in Adderley Gorse. Had a good gallop by Kynsal Heath, over the canal at Cox Bank to Kent's Rough, by Adderley Hall and Station, then ran very fast nearly to Betton, and stopped the hounds near the Styche Brook—quite dark. A very good day—the best we have had for some time at Betton. If the first fox had gone straight, it would have been a very good run. A good scenting day.

"*December 28th*, 1896. *Madeley Village.*—Found in Wrinehills. Ran a nice pace over to Grafton's Wood by Madeley Manor, and killed him near the Gladdings. Found again in Wrinehills. Had a nice gallop by Checkley village, Shaw's Rough, by Doddington, leaving the park on the right; then to the left by Pewit Hall, nearly to Harrow's Wood; then swung to the right by Three Brooks, leaving that and Buerton Gorse on the left, on by Kynsal Lodge and Adderley Gorse and Cox Bank, over the railway, and beat us near Kent's Rough. This was a nice hunting run of about seven-miles point, and did not touch a covert. I think hounds would have killed this fox, but the afternoon got stormy.

"*January 1st*, 1897. *Ashley Village.*—Drew the Forty Acres blank, but I think a fox slipped away unseen. Drew the Cow Leasows blank. Found in the Burnt Woods. Hunted slowly to Hales, and beat us. Drew Old Springs blank. Found in Cheswardine Gorse. Ran sharp to the Spoil Banks, away at the far end, and ran a good pace, leaving Cheswardine village on the left, to Knighton Wood, through it by Loynton, and beat us near Ranton Abbey. This was a good run, a nine-miles point, and thirteen as hounds ran. Hounds deserved the fox, and the fox deserved to get away, for he was a good one, and I hope he will give us the same journey again before the season is over."

In his record of a very ordinary day's sport at Betley on January 4th, 1897, Boxall mentions that "a sad accident happened to Mr. Hall, of Kynsal Lodge, who was kicked and his leg badly broken, also one rib, when he fell from his horse." Mr. James Hall, who is here mentioned with so much sympathy by Boxall, is an old and still constant follower of the Hunt, and a thorough sportsman, and it is satisfactory to know that this unlucky accident has by no means stopped his hunting, or diminished his zeal for the sport. Mr. Hall's memory goes back to the early days when Mr. Davenport kept his hounds at Wolstanton, and he has been good enough to give the present writer some of his juvenile reminiscences of those days. Mr. Hall writes—

"In January, 1847, my father was living at Brampton Tree House near Newcastle. I was home for the holidays, and one afternoon saw hounds and horsemen, a few of the latter in pink, the rest in plain clothes, coming by Dimsdale Old Hall, hounds in full cry. I immediately got a pony out of the stable and met them at the Hempstalls. The fox was dead beat, and was shortly after killed in my father's orchard. Old Maiden was huntsman, and I think his son was whip. The fox was broken up in front of the house, and I had the brush. Maiden told my father I had properly entered. Mr. Wm. Davenport was Master, but I do not think he was out that day. I remember seeing Lewis Adams of the Watlands, and Mr. Hatton of May Bank, and I think the late Mr. Cartlich. The hounds were then kennelled at Wolstanton. My father, brother, and self often went to see them on a Sunday afternoon. The Brampton, Dimsdale, Hempstalls, etc., were then open country; now they are more or less built over. I do not remember where the fox was found."

Since this early entry on his pony, Mr. Hall has developed into a welter weight, and seen much sport, and many a kill in the open, and is as well known as any one in the Hunt for his love of sport and determination to see the fun. He has generally some good weight-carriers in his stable.

"*January 6th*, 1897. *Huntley Hall.*—Found on Draycot Cross. Had a little gallop by Oak Hill and Tean, back to the Cross, and beat us. Drew Dilhorn blank, also Stallington Gorse blank. Found a brace in Black Lake. Killed one, and ran the other very fast through Stallington Park, Fulford Dale, by the Heath, through Schoolhouse Wood, Moddershall, to Cocknage Wood, Blurton Grange, through New Park Wood, over the Longton road, by Trentham Station, crossed the railway near Sidway, over the canal up to Hanford, and beat us near the Hunt stables. This was a good hound run, and dark when we finished. Our fox lay down in a ditch near the Hunt stables, and was seen by Turner, one of the stablemen, to get up just after we had gone.

"*January 11th*, 1897. *Doddington.*—Found two and a half brace in Chapel Wood. Hound stuck to the worst fox. They ran him hard in covert about an hour, and ran him to ground in the belt. Drew Lea Park and Shaw's Rough blank. Found in Checkley Wood. Ran very fast to Finson's Hay Drumble, through it to Cherry Tree Farm, by the Greaves, by Onneley, through Wrinehills, by the Hall, then to Blakenhall Moss to the Cliff, Wybunbury. Here we had the fox in the gardens, but went away again through the Moss, back by Betley Road Station and the Rondelow Farm, and stopped the hounds near the Brookside Wrinehills, quite dark. Up to this day this was the best scenting day this season, also the hardest for hounds. Had we not wasted so much time in Chapel Wood, which could not be helped, I think we should have had a great day. The run from Checkley Wood was good and fast throughout; hounds deserved a fox.

"*February* 10*th*, 1897. *Sandon.*—Found a brace in the wood. Beat us at Wetmoor. Found and killed in the far covert. Found in the Hillside Wood. Had a nice hunt by Fradswell village to Chartley Park, across that to Grindley Station in the Meynell country, and on to Newton, and beat us. Found on Fradswell Heath. Ran him very sharp to ground near Milwich. Found in Hardiwick Heath. Ran fast by the Orange Hayes nearly to Stoke-by-Stone, by Stone Park Wood, through Cotwalton Drumble, up to Spot Gorse. Stopped the hounds. A good day; hard day for horses and hounds.

"*February* 12*th*, 1897. *Red Bull, Market Drayton Road.*—Found at Old Springs. Ran fast to the Spoil Banks, over the Canal Bridge into the Shropshire country. Here pace and scent improved, and we went very fast to Colehurst, and had a wide ring back to the Spoil Banks, where we got in amongst a lot of fresh foxes. Ran a good pace nearly to Chipnall Wood, back by Old Springs to the Spoil Banks, over the canal; then hunted slowly nearly to Hinstock, in the Shropshire country, thus paying them a second visit in one day. During this run we had several gentlemen who were hunting with the Shropshire hounds joined us, also their second whip. Drew Cheswardine Gorse blank. Found near the Hall. Ran fast towards Chipnall Wood, back by the Hall, and over to Bishop's Woods, and beat us. A very nice day's sport.

"*February* 15*th*, 1897. *Madeley.*—Found in Wrinehill Wood. Had a nice hunt with a ringing fox, through Checkley Wood, Finson's Hay Drumble, by Cherry Tree Farm, the Greaves, back through Checkley Wood, over the brook towards Betley Road Station, then turned to the left; and killed him the Bridgemere end of Shaw's Rough. Drew Admiral's Gorse blank. Found in Harrow's Wood. Ran at a nice pace by the Three Brooks nearly to Buerton village; then bore away to the right by Pewit Hall, and ran him to ground near Doddington. A very nice gallop.

"*February* 22*nd*, 1897. *Woore.*—Drew the Mill Hay and Harrow's Wood blank. Found in the Three Brooks. He went away at the bottom end, leaving Admiral's Gorse on his right, to Mill Green Wood, over the Woore and Nantwich Road to Finson's Hay Gorse, through the Drumble to Checkley Wood, away at the far end to the Rondelow; over the London and North-Western line above Betley Road Station, he ran the line side to Chorlton; back over the line near Blakenhall this gallant fox struggled, on back towards the Higher Den. Hounds raced him the last few fields, and rolled him over in the open. This was one of the best runs we have had for years. We came back to the Woore coverts, and found in the Canridden. Had a nice hunt over to the Railway Covert at Bearston, back through Bellaport Wood to Dorrington, over by the Woore Ash to the Crab Wood, and on to the Canridden, and ran to ground. A good day. Hounds went a good pace throughout the first run. We also had a nice little gallop later in the day, but scent was better in the morning. Weather fine, but rather choky for hounds.

"*February 24th*, 1897. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Hose Wood blank. When coming away, a fox was seen asleep in a ploughed field below New Close Sprink. We put him up, and had a good fifty minutes. The line was by Painsley Hall up to Hose Wood, through it to New Close Sprink, down where we found him to the North Staffordshire Railway. He ran by Cresswell Station, leaving Saverley Green on the left, through Leacroft to Fulford Quarry, and ran him to ground in a drain in Stallington Park. We could easily have got him out, but left him because he was a Draycot fox. We trotted back to Fradswell Heath; got on to a line of a fox; hunted him slowly through Birchwood Park to Middleton Green, back through Brindley's Wood, where we got up to our fox. Then he went away at a good pace over a beautiful line of country by Leigh, and ran him to ground in the Meynell country at Field. This was a good forty minutes.

"*March 5th*, 1897. *Manor House, Ashley.*—Found near Lordsley. Ran sharp to Willoughbridge by the Lodge to Mucklestone back by Winnington and Bearston Mill; ran him to ground in the river-bank below Napeley Heath. Drew the Cow Leasows blank; found in the Forty Acres. Ran fast through Willowbridge to Maer Hills; stopped the hounds, but five and a half couples went on with the fox to Chatcull. We went to Burnt Woods; drew them blank. Found in Park Springs (Hales). Ran very fast for fifteen minutes; ran him to ground in a rock at Old Springs. Got him out, gave him a start; hounds raced up to him and killed below Hales. Later news: the five and a half couple killed their fox at Charnes. A very good scenting day. Hounds could run as well in covert as in the open.

"*March 8th*, 1897. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew the Betton Coverts blank. Found three foxes in Golling's Rough. Had a slow hunt with one to Kynsal and back by Highfields, and beat us near Golling's Rough. Drew the Rough again, but did not find. Found in Adderley Gorse, but did nothing. Found in Buerton Gorse. Had a very nice gallop to Bellaport by the Glades to Brownhills, where he tried the earths, which were stopped; then away at the top through the new plantation, and beat us in the Glades Wood. Found in Bellaport Wood. Had another nice gallop nearly to the Canridden by the Woore Ash, back over the Racecourse by Dorrington, back through Bellaport, and beat us near the Brand Farm. No scent in the morning, but in the afternoon hounds ran very nicely. On leaving Buerton Gorse, poor Daphne, one of our best bitches, was kicked by a horse and broke her thigh. She had to be destroyed. A great loss.

"*March 12th*, 1897. *Oakley Folly.*—His Grace the Duke of Sutherland hunted the hounds. I was at home ill. His Grace drew the Folly, the coverts near Oakley Hall, Tunstall Rough, Brickyard Covert, and Rectory gardens blank. Found in the Cow Leasows, and lost him near Willoughbridge. Found a brace in Mucklestone Wood. Had a very nice gallop through the Forty Acres, by Oakley nearly to Betton, and back by Oakley, and lost him. Found in the Rookery Wood, Bellaport. Had a very good gallop to Dorrington over the Woore Racecourse by the Ash, nearly to Admiral's Gorse, on by Three Brooks College Fields Drumble to Bellaport Wood, through it and on to Norton Wood. Hounds were in the same field as the fox. Here a fresh fox jumped up. Hounds ran him through Golling's Rough to the Glades before they could be stopped.

"*March 29th*, 1897. *Mucklestone Village.*—Drew Bellaport Coverts blank. Found in the Canridden. Had a nice gallop by Bellaport and Napeley Heath to the Forty Acres and to Lordsley Gorse, and lost him. Drew Betton and Golling's Rough Blank. Found in Adderley Gorse. Killed in Mr. Kellock's stackyard. Found in Buerton Gorse; lost him near Woore. A good day."

The season ended on March 31st, with a poor day's sport from Willoughbridge Cross-roads.

The season's record was seventy-six foxes killed, sixty-five run to ground, ninety-five days' hunting, twenty-three days stopped by frost and snow.

Subscriptions for 1896–97 amounted to £2638 altogether; £490 allotted to Poultry and Covert Fund, and £285 to the Wire Fund.

# CHAPTER XV.

SEASON OF 1897–98 AN OPEN ONE—GOOD SPORT IN DECEMBER—"G. F. U." IN "COUNTRY SPORT" ON THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT—PRESENTATION OF PORTRAIT TO M.F.H.

THE season of 1897–98 opened well with some good days, and a good record of kills amongst the cubs. Hunting was only stopped by frost for six days throughout the season. The following extracts are from Boxall's diary:—

"*November 3rd*, 1897. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Bramley Wood. Hounds ran fast through the gorse, leaving Sherratt's Wood on the left, to Whitley Brook, by Milwich and Fradswell Hall, up to the New Gorse (Sandon). Here it became slow hunting; gave him up about a mile beyond Gayton Church. Trotted back to Sherratt's Wood, found, and went away at once to Birchwood Park, where hounds got divided. Several foxes were soon knocking about. We ran with one lot back through Sherratt's Wood, and ran him to ground near Morrilow Heath. The other lot went over to Brindley's Wood, where they were stopped. A very raw, cold day; hounds could run well up wind. Had a very useful day's sport.

"*November 15th*, 1897. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in Betton Moss. Ran over to Brownhills. The fox went over the canal; did not hunt him. Drew a small covert and Golling's Rough blank. Found in Adderley Gorse. Had to leave him; would not go away. Found in Buerton Gorse. Hunted slowly towards Bellaport. Here there was a brace of foxes soon afoot; they both went away together. Hounds settled to one, and went at a good pace by Bellaport Hall and Kellock's Gorse, and killed him near Adderley Gorse. This was fast throughout; hounds never checked from find to finish. Very sharp, cold morning; four degrees of frost. No scent in covert or down wind, but ran fast up wind from Bellaport to Adderley Gorse. His Grace hunted the hounds.

"*November 20th. Whitmore Station.*—Drew the Common blank. Found in Whitmore Wood. Ran fast back over the Common by the Rectory to Oxhay Wood, Keele; through it to Butterton village, Shut Lane Head; then over by Acton, leaving Swynnerton Old Park on the left, to Chorlton Moss, back over the London and North-Western line, and ran him to ground on Whitmore Common. Found in Hayes Sprink. Ran fast through Holdershaw Wood, where a brace went away. Hunted one fast nearly to Madeley; then swung round to the left by Keele Grange, up to the village, through Dun's Wood to Holdershaw Wood, through it to Spring Pool Wood, and beat us. A very hot day; a useful scent in the open, but not much in covert. Hounds ran fast at times. This was the best day we ever had from Whitmore.

"*November* 26*th*. *Eccleshall.*—Found in Wincote Wood. Had a nice hunt nearly to Ranton; then bore round to the right, and beat us near Loynton Hall. Found two brace at Sugnall Osiers. Hounds rattled one about the covert and killed him. After we broke him up, put the hounds on the line of one that had gone away, and hunted him by the Brickyard Covert and to Brocton, where he beat us. It is a pity the wire is used so much in this part, for it is a nice hunting country, and plenty of foxes in it.

"*December* 6*th*. *Woore.*—Found in the Canridden. Beat us at Hankin Hayes. When going to draw Dorrington Woods, a fox jumped up. Hunted him by Woore Hall to the Canridden and Harrow's Wood. Killed him in the New Gorse; he got over the wire and could not get out. Drew Three Brooks blank. Found in the Mill Hay. Had a nice hunt round by Mill Green, Admiral's Gorse, and Three Brooks to Buerton Gorse, and beat us. Were going to draw Bellaport, but a storm came on, so gave it up. After a very wet night the ground was very slippery. There were several falls. Mr. Vaughan Williams's horse broke its back. A very bad scent.

"*December* 8*th*. *Stoke-by-Stone.*—Found three foxes in Hardiwick Heath. Had a turn round the covert, then went out on the Sandon side; came back by the Woodman's house, then over to Orange Hayes, Lodge Plantation, the Drumble, by Peatshill Wood to Moddershall Oaks. Had a wide ring about there; then went over the hill by Knenhall to Kibblestone, and ran him to ground in Oulton Rocks. Found again on Downs Banks. Had another good run by Bartwell and Knenhall to Moddershall Oaks, through it nearly to Spot Gorse, turned short, back through the Nurseries, Stallington Heath, by Stallington Hall, and ran him to ground in the Warren. A very good day; a good scenting day. Two good runs.

"*December* 15*th*, 1897. *Stallington Hall.*—Drew the Sprinks blank. Found in Hose Wood. Ran fast by Cresswell Station; beat us near Blythe Bridge. Drew Stallington Gorse blank. Found in Black Lake. Had three wide rings round the Stallington country, and stopped the hounds in Moddershall Oaks. Our horses were all done up; very hard day. Rather a stormy morning, but cleared up later. We had one of the best days that has been for a long time on that side. Hounds were hard at work all day. Horses had enough when I stopped the hounds at Moddershall.

"*December* 20*th*, 1897. *Mucklestone.*—Found a brace of foxes at Bellaport. Had a nice hunt with one by Norton and Woore to Betton Moss, and stopped the hounds at Brownhills. Found in Golling's Rough. Ran very fast up wind to Bellaport, where he got to ground. Another fox went away at the same time. Hunted him by Dorrington Old Hall, the Canridden, Hankin Hayes, and stopped the hounds near the Glades Wood. Drew Adderley Gorse blank. Found in the Belt. Ran fast to Buerton Gorse, where there were three foxes on foot. Our hunted fox went on. The hounds killed a fresh one. A good day. A very cold, raw day. Hounds could race up wind and hunt down wind.

"*December* 27*th*, 1897. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Found in the osier-bed at Oakley. Had a good gallop by Bellaport and the Canridden, and killed him in the Harrow's Wood. Drew the Glades blank. Found in the next little covert. Had a good gallop by Golling's Rough, Buerton Gorse, and Bellaport, and killed him on the roadside between Bearston and Norton-in-Hales. Drew the Betton coverts blank. Found in the laurels at Oakley Hall. Ran him to ground two fields away. A very sudden thaw set in on Sunday (26th), which was very welcome. There was a good scent. Hounds ran fast from find to finish. His Grace hunted the hounds.

"*January 17th*, 1898. *Madeley Village.*—Drew Wrinehills blank. Found in Checkley Wood. Lost him near Checkley village. Drew Shaw's Rough blank. Found in Chapel Wood, Doddington. Lost him at Birchall Moss. Found again in Finson's Hayes Gorse. Ran fast back into Doddington Park; lost him near the Lake. Found three foxes in Chapel Wood a second time. Hounds stuck to one, and ran one for nearly an hour in the wood. Ran him to ground; got him out and killed. The fox we lost near the Lake was afterwards found drowned in the Lake.

"*January 20th*, 1898. *Micklow House.*—Found in Micklow Gorse. Ran fast to Darlaston Wood; ran him to ground in the Trent Wood. Drew Yarnfield Osier-bed and the Fox Covert blank. Found in the Pilson's. Ran him to ground near Meece. Found and ran to ground on Tittensor Chase. Found in Trentham Wood. Had an unusual hunt. The fox ran right round the Lake, back through the Wood, away at the top of the hill, and up to Hanchurch; back by Cliff's Rough, over Mr. Lakin's farm, and into the Kennel field, through High Greaves Wood, over the Park, and back into the wood, and beat us. A very good scenting day. Hounds ran fast. Cora, a hound puppy, joined the hounds at Tittensor, and hunted with them and came home like an old hound. Also Wasp, a terrier, worked with the pack from Trentham Wood. His Grace hunted the hounds.

"*January 26th*, 1898. *Seighford.*—Found in the Moors. Had a very nice gallop by Great Bridgeford, through the White Hart to Walton Bank; then swung to the left; went back by Radford Pool, Brickyard Wood, the Witches, and ran him to ground at Docksey. Found a brace in the Witches. Ran fast towards Seighford, turned to the right, back by the Ashes to the Moors, away on the far side, and ran him to ground in the White Hart Wood. Drew the Cross-roads Wood blank. Found in William's Wood a brace. Had a very sharp gallop, about twenty-five minutes, and ran him to ground in a drain; bolted him and killed. A nice day's sport. Hounds ran fast at times. Mr. Dobson, of Seighford Hall, had the misfortune to lose a good mare.

"*January 31st*, 1898. *Woore.*—Drew the Mill Hay, Admiral's Gorse, and Harrow's Wood blank. Found in the Three Brooks. Ran him into the second field from the covert, and killed. Found again in the Three Brooks. Had a nice little run for ten minutes; ran him to ground near Pewit Hall. Found again in Chapel Wood, Doddington. Ran sharp over to Wybunbury, and lost. Drew Buerton Gorse and Adderley Gorse blank. Found in Golling's Rough. Had a nice gallop by the Brand, Norton-in-Hales Station, to Bellaport, where hounds got divided. One lot went on by Woore Hall, and lost near the Crab Wood; the other lot was stopped in covert at Bellaport. After a very stormy night, it turned out a nice day with a fairish scent. His Grace hunted the hounds.

"*February 16th*, 1898. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Found in Hose Wood. Hounds ran fast through New Close Sprink, Draycot Gorse, Sherratt's Wood to Witley Brook, by Garshall Green, nearly to the Bird-in-Hand, and ran him to ground near New Buildings Farm. Found again in Black Lake. Ran him to ground near Stallington. Drew Black Lake again, also Stallington Gorse and Heath blank. Found in the Nurseries. Had a sharp gallop. A ring through Stallington, Black Lake, Moddershall Oaks, the Nurseries, back to Stallington and beat us. It was blowing a gale all the time. A very windy day, but hounds could run. A good forty-five minutes with the first fox.

"*February 28th*, 1898. *The Cliffe, Wybunbury.*—Drew Jerusalem and Lea Park blank. Found in Blakenhall Moss. Had a very nice gallop over to Wrinehills, through Beeches Wood, into Checkley Wood, and beat us near the village. Drew Shaw's Rough blank. Found in Chapel Wood. Had nice gallop to Admiral's Gorse, where another fox went away towards Woore, but did not hunt him. Drew Harrow's Wood, Three Brooks, Canridden, and Buerton Gorse blank. Found in Adderley Gorse. Had another very good gallop through Golling's Rough to Bellaport; then on by Dorrington Old Hall, Woore Hall, and beat us at the Flash Farm. Rather a nice hunting day, and a good holding scent. His Grace hunted the hounds.

"*March 16th*, 1898. *Sandon.*—Drew the wood blank. Found a brace in Gayton Gorse. Hounds ran fast through Gayton Wood, then nearly to Chartley, back by Fradswell, and ran him to ground near the gorse where we found him. Drew Shaw's Wood blank. Found in Hardiwick Heath. Had a nice hunt, and killed at Day Hills. Drew Sherratt's Wood and Middleton Gorse blank. Found in Brindley's Wood. Had another very good run, a wide ring, and killed him at Dodsleigh. A very nice day; a good scent. I think this was the best day's sport we had on this side of the country this season.

"*March 28th*, 1898. *Woore.*—Drew Mill Hay and Admiral's Gorse blank. Found in Mr. Noden's osier-bed. A very fast gallop, a wide ring, and ran him to ground in the made earth near Admiral's Gorse. Bolted him with a terrier, had another good spin for twelve minutes, and rolled him over near Birchall. Drew all the Woore coverts blank. Found a brace in Buerton Gorse. Ran fast to Audlem, back by Cox Bank to Betton, and stopped the hounds at Oakley, after a very good run. A very nice day, and one of the best scenting days of the season. The same two foxes had given us two good runs on two other occasions."

The season wound up with a poor day's sport at Swynnerton Old Park on April 4th.

Boxall records it as his opinion that "although an open season, it has not been a good one. Foxes have run badly." Record: sixty-four foxes killed, eighty-two run to ground, one hundred and fifteen days' hunting altogether. No blank days, and only six days stopped by frost. Subscriptions amounted to £2687, of which £526 were allotted to Poultry and Covert Fund, and £205 to wire.

The following article, which originally appeared in *Country Sport*, was reproduced in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of January 8th, 1898, and is worth reprinting here as a racy and entertaining, though not a perfectly accurate, account of the North Staffordshire Hunt and its followers:—

## THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT.

Hunting men generally, and members of the North Staffordshire Hunt in particular, will read with interest the following article that appeared as the leading article in *Country Sport* under the hunting heading "In the Pink," in the issue of that journal of January 1st. The remarks on riding to hounds may cause some introspection among followers of the Hunt. The writer says—

"Christmas is over. 'Thank goodness!' some of my readers will exclaim, but personally I am sorry, for I spent the festive season in my native county of Staffordshire, a county, so far as fox-hunting is concerned, which will bear comparison even with Leicestershire or Northamptonshire. We may not possess the big pastures of the so-called fashionable shires, with four gates to every field (and those left open when hounds meet in the vicinity), but we possess farmers who not only profess to love fox-hunting, but preserve foxes. And we have a country which demands skill both on the part of the horse and the rider to get over. I have heard men who consider the pleasure of hunting to consist merely in galloping over grass and through gates, declare that both the North Staffordshire and the Albrighton countries are cramped countries. In one sense I admit that they are. The enclosures are small, and seldom have more than one gate, and the obstacles embrace every description of fence ever devised by the farmer. To ride in the first flight with the North Staffordshire, a man must possess a clever horse and plenty of nerve. Unfortunately, a good many of the followers lack this latter quality. They appear to think that the science of riding over a cramped country consists in pulling up their horses into a trot before every fence, a practice to be condemned for many reasons. It has always been a maxim of mine never to ride into another man's pocket, but what is one to do when at the only jumpable place in a fence your leader, who has been going at racing pace over the flat, suddenly pulls his horse up? One must either ride over him or pull one's own horse out of his stride, and not improbably make him refuse. A willing horse who goes with dash at his fences hates nothing more than to be checked at the last moment. A man may say that he has every right to ride at his fences in whatever way he may choose, and I admit his right to do so, but I do not admit his right to put my horse out of his stride because he funks his fence. The hard funker is almost as great a nuisance in the hunting-field as the thrusting scoundrel, and, to add insult to injury, he will invariably excuse himself by saying that he rides with judgment. I hope the North Staffordshire men will not be angry with me for my remarks, which are intended to apply to every hunting country. What I wish to impress upon my readers is that it is not necessary, in riding over a cramped country, to ride slowly at one's fences. There is moderation in all things, and I do not advocate the method of riding at every fence as if it were the water-jump in a steeplechase course, but I feel sure that this habit of riding slowly at the fence, a habit which has largely increased of late years, is responsible for many accidents. That it deprives horses of their natural courage there can be no doubt, and I should never advise anybody to buy a horse from a man who possessed the habit. But I am overrunning my scent, a sin which I would not have committed if it had not been for the opinions expressed to me by Staffordshire gentlemen who do ride to hounds during this week.

"Though considered now one of the best hunting countries in England, North Staffordshire did not possess an orthodox pack till 1845, when Mr. William Davenport founded the Hunt and held the reins of office till 1870.* From 1870 till 1874 Lord Shrewsbury and Captain Nugent hunted the country under a joint Mastership. In 1874 the present Master, the Duke of Sutherland, then Marquis of Stafford, took office. The secretarial duties are performed by Mr. Alexander Simpson, of Trentham, and, Mr. Reginald N. Wood, of Bignall End, Newcastle. Will Boxall acts as huntsman, with Ned Parker and Ernest Jones to whip in to him. The kennels, which contain sixty couples of hounds, are at Trentham, and the hunting days are Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

"Perhaps the simplest manner in which I can describe the country is by saying that it is bisected by the London and North-Western Railway line, which runs from Stafford to Crewe. The best part of the country is on the western side of the line, round Doddington Park in Cheshire and Woore in Shropshire; for the North Staffordshire country embraces a small portion of Salop and a small slice of south Cheshire. Trentham is almost exactly the centre of the country, three miles south of Newcastle and Stoke, both of which places can supply hunting-fields as well as they can pottery, as also can Burslem, a few miles further north. Stafford, however, is the favourite resort for hunting men, as it is on the borders of the North Staffordshire and the Albrighton countries. Indeed, it is difficult to tell where the line of division runs, as certain coverts—Seighford for one—which used to belong to the Albrighton, have been relinquished to the North Staffordshire, though Sandon, the nearest large covert to the north of Stafford, has always belonged to the North Staffordshire. Going eastwards from Sandon we come to Chartley, probably the largest woodland in the country, then to Loxley Park, and on to Uttoxeter, which may be termed the divisional town between the North Staffordshire and the Meynell. The Vale of Churnet may be taken as the eastern boundary, better marked on the map as the Churnet Valley Railway. Turning to the west, we have Crewe on the extreme north, and come south to Doddington and Woore, and this, as I have already said, is by far the best side of the country for fox-hunting purposes. It is what hunting men term the Cheshire type of country, not a very extraordinary fact when we consider that a large part of it is in Cheshire, consisting chiefly of dairy farms, small enclosures, level ground, deep soil, and fair hedge-and-ditch fences, the hedge often being set on a low bank. The increase in the Pottery industries has taken away a large slice of the central portion of the country, and factories have usurped the place of coverts. This may appear to be disastrous to sport, but in reality it is not so; for where there are so many industries and factories there must be wealth, and without a strong subscription list it is impossible to maintain a hunting establishment according to modern requirements. This reminds me to say that the minimum subscription is ten pounds.

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* Our readers will note several inaccuracies as to dates and facts in this part of "G. F. U.'s" article.

"But it is not the existence of wealth, as shown by the subscription list, which proves the love of sport in a hunting country as much as the proper distribution of wealth. Men have often wondered to me that in a country commonly called 'The Potteries,' fox-hunting should exist, and have been surprised when I told them that they make horses as well as china in North Staffordshire. Mr. Ralph Sneyd knew this, and established the stud paddocks at Keele, near Newcastle, where at the present time he keeps three stallions—namely, Beaulieu, Black Bryony, and Dog Rose, at half fees for tenant-farmers in the North-Staffordshire country. The Duke of Sutherland gives the services of his stallion, St. Clair, free to tenant-farmers; and Mr. W. Carless, who holds the best practice as a veterinary surgeon in Staffordshire, keeps his stallion Savoy at half fees for tenant-farmers. With this encouragement for horse-breeding, it is little wonder that the farmers regard hunting with favour. I have always thought, and I was glad to hear during this Christmas week my opinion confirmed by some of the best judges in Staffordshire, that horse-breeding, great lottery as it undoubtedly is, still is the best remedy for agricultural depression; so that hunting men will give the farmers more encouragement in this direction is the hope of

"G. F. U."

The season of 1898–99 appears to have been on the whole an average season, with a fair record of sport and of foxes killed; but the cub-hunting Boxall describes as the worst season he has seen, "owing to dry weather and no scent."

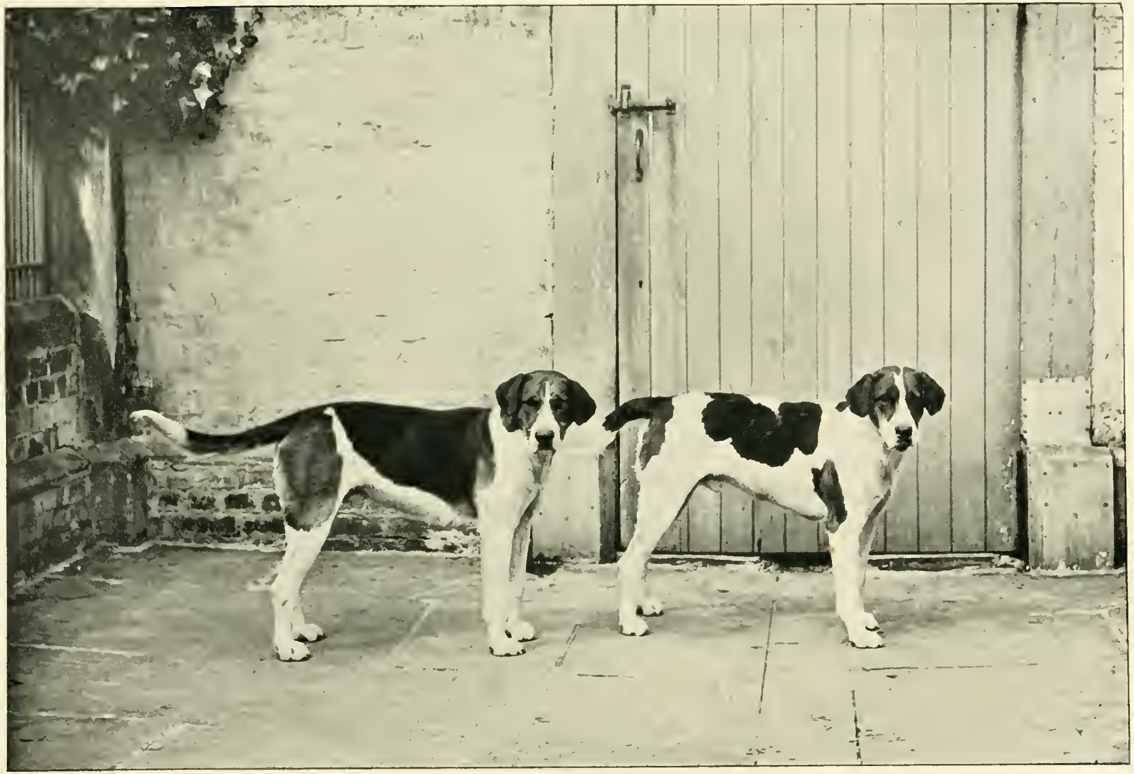
"*November* 5*th*. *Cold Norton.*—Found in Cold Norton Gorse. Went away at a good pace towards Pirehill, then bearing towards Whitgreave, leaving Yarlet Hill on the left, to Marston, back by Aston, Pirehill to Micklow Gorse, where, I think, we changed, but hounds kept going on, and ran to ground in a pit-hole near Cold Norton, after a very good fifty minutes. Drew Mr. Ball's osier-bed, Shallowford Gorse, Yeld's Rough, and Holland's Wood blank. Found in Badenhall. Had a very nice hunt by Chebsey and Hilcote, and stopped the hounds towards Sugnall. Our first run from Cold Norton is up to this day the run of the season; after the heavy storm scent was not so good.

"*December* 9*th*, 1898. *Great Bridgeford.*—Drew Cresswell blank. Found in Hopton Gorse—a brace. Ran one to ground one field away. Drew several coverts about Yarlet blank. Found in Shallowford Gorse. Had a very good hunting run by Micklow Gorse, Darlaston Park, over the Trent by Meaford Inn, on to the Outlanes, and over Downs Banks; then to Barlaston, and went to ground in Newstead Wood. One hour and twenty-five minutes. The run from Shallowford Gorse was a very nice hunting run, and an unusual one considering the fox had to swim the river Trent, then a canal, and cross the North Stafford Railway near Stone Station.

"*December* 10*th*, 1898. *Loggerheads.*—Drew the Burnt Woods blank. Found in the hilly part of Bishop's Woods—a brace—but did nothing. Hounds marked a fox to ground in Broughton Birches; bolted him, and killed in the wood. Just when hounds had eaten him, another bolted out of the same earth, and had a very nice gallop by the Rudge, through Broughton Park, and ran him to ground near Fair Oaks. Drew Charnes blank. Found three foxes in Standon Rough. Had a sharp burst about fifteen minutes; ran him to ground near the covert. Found again in the Rough. Had a capital run, leaving Standon Hall on the left, by Standon Home to Swinchurch, nearly to Hatton, by the Clayholders to Shortwood and Podmore. Hounds raced up to their fox and rolled him over near Bromley Coppice, after the best forty-five minutes we have had up to now. Rather a windy day. Did nothing in the Big Woods; but we had the best afternoon's sport of the season. The second run from Standon Rough was very good all through.

"*December* 12*th*, 1898. *Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Wood, and ran him to ground in the Long Belt. Drew Walgherton Wood, Lea Park, Blakenhall Moss blank. Found in Robinhood Wood; beat us near Betley Road Station. Found in Finson's Hayes Gorse. Had a very nice gallop to Bellaport. Here hounds got split up. The leading hounds went on, and ran fast to Richwardine, back through the Glades, and ran him to ground at Cobscot. Whilst these hounds were away, Dean arrived with the fox we had run to ground at Doddington; turned him down near Bellaport, and beat us near Dorrington. A large field out, and had an enjoyable day, but an unlucky one, owing to a train running into the hounds near Betley Road Station, on the London and North-Western Railway, and killing poor Active, one of our best bitches also our prize bitch in 1897—a great loss."

A lawn meet was arranged for Trentham on December 23rd, 1898, on the occasion of the presentation of the



"FACTOR." "GRAFTON."

*From a photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

portrait of the noble Master by the members of the Hunt in acknowledgment of the sport the Duke had shown for the twenty-five years of his Mastership.

Unfortunately, there was a very sharp frost, and hunting was impossible, but the members turned up in great force for the breakfast and the presentation, which was thus recorded in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of the following day :

"Yesterday morning a large company assembled at Trentham Hall, on the occasion of a presentation being made to the Duke of Sutherland, in recognition of his valued services as Master of the North Staffordshire Hunt for a period of twenty-five years. The presentation took the form of a portrait of His Grace by Professor Herkomer, R.A., towards the cost of which there were about four hundred subscribers, embracing the members, supporters, and tenant-farmers of the Hunt. The portrait is a splendid work of art, representing the Duke seated and in morning dress. The *pose* is natural, and the likeness is excellent, the features of his Grace bearing a very happy expression. A printed list of the subscribers, bound in crimson, accompanied the testimonial. Mr. R. N. Wood and Mr. A. Simpson (secretary to the Hunt) have been the hon. secretaries of the presentation movement, which has met with a ready response in the district of the Hunt. Among the company of about two hundred and fifty attending the proceedings yesterday were the following:—Members of the Hunt: Mr. J. W. Philips, Mr. R. N. Wood, Mr. W. E. Bowers, Sir George Chetwode, Bart., Mr. Delves Broughton (Doddington), Mr. W. W. Dobson, Mr. A. H. Heath, Mr. F. J. Harrison, Mr. R. P. Copeland, Sir Hill Child, Bart., Captain Stamer, Mr. C. E. Challinor, Mr. R. Donaldson-Hudson (Cheswardine), Mr. J. A. Fairhurst, Mr. R. D. Garde, Mr. James Hall, Mr. H. O. Jones, Mr. C. R. A. Birch, Mr. G. Menzies, Mr. J. A. Tomlinson, Mr. J. G. Knight, Mr. J. H. Knight, Mr. A. W. Leedam, Mr. A. W. Radford Norcop, Mr. W. Moat, Mr. W. R. Parker Jervis, Mr. P. H. Rawson, Mr. F. G. Mather, Mr. A. Simpson, Mr. W. R. Kirkham, Mr. W. Thompson, Mr. T. W. Twyford, Mr. R. C. Trigger, Mr. J. Meadows, jun., Mr. E. J. W. Wood, Mr. F. R. Patzer, Mr. J. H. Rimmer, Mr. R. Stevenson, Mr. A. Fielding, Mr. W. Mould, and Mr. C. J. Stubbs. Subscribers and tenant-farmers: Messrs. J. Bourne (Rectory Farm, Mucklestone), R. B. Mellard, Joseph Bayley, R. Read, T. C. Heath, W. S. Heaton, Matthew Hall, E. Darlington, M. Darlington, W. Darlington, J. Darlington, T. Wibberley, E. Noden (Seabridge), J. Q. Lamb, J. Marston, J. Nunnerley, E. Sandbach, E. Simpson, J. Vernon, G. Vernon, T. M. Unett, T. Westray, J. Warrillow, R. S. Wilkinson, T. Noden (Bridgmere), T. Bagnall, R. Hassall, W. Jackson, T. Wood, W. F. Wilkinson, W. Woolley, J. Ansell, J. Ball, F. C. Beeston, F. G. Bennett, T. Brandon, A. Brown, C. Byrd, E. Clowes, W. Coomer, J. Dorrell, T. Earp, J. Blockley, A. E. Chadderton, T. Parton, etc. The presentation took place in the dining-room, the Duke being accompanied by the Duchess of Sutherland and their children (the Marquis of Stafford and Lord Alistair Leveson-Gower), Miss Chaplin, Miss Florence Chaplin, and Mrs. Twemlow (Betley Court).

"Mr. J. W. Philips, addressing the Duke, said it had fallen to his part, as chairman of the committee, to present to his Grace his portrait from the members, farmers, and supporters of the North Staffordshire Hunt. He need not say to those who had hunted under his Grace's Mastership for more than a quarter of a century, that he had done his best to keep the whole country together and to maintain its high reputation for sport. (Hear, hear!) Even in these days, notwithstanding the support that Masters of Hounds received from the vast majority of farmers, there were very many details and very many anxieties, all of which took up the Master's time, besides the management of the kennels and stables. The Duke had not been sparing of his time, trouble, and attention to these details, the want of attention to which was very detrimental to the success of a Hunt. He (Mr. Philips) was expressing the wish of all present when he said that they hoped they might have many more years of his Grace's Mastership of the North Staffordshire Hunt. (Applause.) It was with a very earnest feeling of gratitude and the heartfelt wish for the happiness and prosperity of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland and their family that they asked his Grace's acceptance of that likeness as the contribution of the North Staffordshire Hunt to the family pictures which adorned his home. (Applause.)

"The Duke of Sutherland said he had to thank them very sincerely for presenting him with that picture. He thought it was a great compliment to receive such a testimonial of good-will from his friends who hunted with those hounds and who lived around them, and he could assure them that this gift was a very gratifying one to his wife and himself. He might also take that opportunity of thanking the landowners, the members of the Hunt, the farmers, and the supporters of the Hunt for the kindness and friendship always shown to him for many years —a friendship he should always remember and which would always be very highly valued by him. (Hear, hear!) They always claimed that hunting, more than any other sport, knitted those of different occupations in a common bond of good fellowship. (Applause.) They saw many fresh faces around them since he first undertook the management of those hounds, but he was glad to say that they still had some of the old friends with them, and those who would succeed them would no doubt carry on the good old sport of fox-hunting. (Hear, hear!) He would especially like to thank those farmers who for years had supported the Hunt, some of whom he was glad to see and welcome there that day. (Hear, hear!) There was no doubt that if, like themselves, their sons were brought up to fox-hunting, the sport would not fail in that country. (Hear, hear!) He would only once more thank them very sincerely for the picture they had presented to him. (Applause.)

"Mr. Philips said he should like to add a word of recognition of the hon. secretaries for the trouble they had taken in bringing the testimonial to such a happy conclusion. He was sure that the members of the Hunt and the subscribers were exceedingly indebted to them for their services. (Applause.)

"On the invitation of the Duke, the company then partook of a Hunt breakfast, the repast, which was a bountiful one, being served with much elegance in the dining-room. The usual meet of the hounds followed, the field being an unusually numerous one. The New Park coverts were visited, but in consequence of the frost the turf was not in condition for hunting."

A copy of this excellent likeness is given as a frontispiece to this volume, having been photographed specially for this work by Mr. Harrison, the well-known photographer of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

"*December* 28*th*, 1898. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Fradswell Heath, Birchwood Park, Long Plantation, and Middleton Gorse blank. Found in Brindley's Wood. Ran a good pace to Fradswell Heath, Birchwood Park, leaving Chartley Park on the right, over a lot of country I did not know in the Meynell Hunt, but went on through Kingstone Woods into Bagot's Park, and beat us. A good hunting run—a nine-miles point. The run from Brindley's Wood was the best up to this as regards being straight; but Bagot's Woods are not a good place to get into—they are large and full of deer. Rubicon, the horse I rode through the run, died a few minutes after getting home—poor old horse!

"*January* 4*th*, 1899. *Black Lake.*—Found in Black Lake, and went away at once to the Windmill, then to the gorse, on to Leacrofts, by the Bear Hole to Hose Wood, and Bromley Wood to Hilderstone Wood, through it to Day Hills, back by Hardwick on the left, also Peats Hill to Cotwalton Drumble, where he ran to ground, after one of the best runs of the season. Found in Spot Nursery. Had another nice hunt by Black Lake, Stallington, Leacroft, and Fulford, back through Stallington Heath and the Nurseries down nearly to where the first fox went to ground; but he got headed in the road, and went back to Moddershall, to the Nurseries. I stopped the hounds, as horses were done up. Rather a dull morning, but a good scenting one. Hounds ran fast for over an hour without a check with the first fox from Black Lake. This was the best run of the season up to now. We had a very good hunt from the Nurseries, and stopped the hounds late in the afternoon. Horses were all beat. A good and hard day's sport.

"*January* 11*th*, 1899. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Drew the wood blank. Found a brace in Brindley's Wood. Had a little gallop, a ring, and beat us at Middleton Green Gorse. Got on to a line of a fox that had slipped away from Hose Wood, but owing to a storm coming on we could not do much. Found three foxes in Bromley Wood. Had a very good run all over the Draycot country, and ran him to ground near Middleton Gorse. One hour and forty minutes. A very good run. Rather a cold, stormy day. Found plenty of foxes, and had a very good run after the storm abated. Nearly a record run: an hour and forty minutes. A good pace all through; but we must have changed foxes. I don't think one could have stood up so long at the pace hounds went.

"*February* 11*th*, 1899. *Betley.*—Drew the gorse blank. Found in the belt near. Hunted him slowly to Foxley Drumble, where we got up to him; then had a fast gallop round by Foxley, back by Barthomley, and killed in Mill Dale. Another fox went away from the Dale, but did nothing with him. Found a brace in Foxley Gorse. Hounds rattled one about the covert and killed; the other went away at the same time. Put hounds on to him, and had a good twenty-five minutes. Ran him to ground in a drain near Bignall End; bolted him and killed. A nice day's sport. This country is doing very well this season.

"*February* 14*th*, 1899. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Fradswell Heath and Birchwood Park blank. Found in Brindley's Wood. After taking a turn round the wood, he went away towards Middleton Green; then back by the Pool, through Birchwood Park, nearly to Chartley; back to Middleton Gorse, to Draycot New Gorse, Hose Wood; then by Painsley Hall, Saverley Green on the left, Leacroft, Stallington Grange, Black Lake, Stallington Heath, the Nursery, Schoolhouse Wood; back by Stallington Park, nearly to the Grange, Leacroft, Saverley Green, and Painsley Hall. Here hounds got on good terms with their fox, and raced along to the New Gorse, back through Hose Wood, nearly to Bromley Wood; then short to the right by the New Buildings Farm, down the hill, leaving the Hose Wood on the right. Hounds raced up to their fox and killed him in good style, after three hours and a half hard hunting. We had a nice hunt with our fox from Brindley's Wood to Hose Wood. Here I think we changed foxes; but all the same hounds kept hunting on, and from here we had a fine run to Black Lake and Stallington Heath, Schoolhouse Wood being our furthest point; then turning back and going over the same line of country we had come, nearly to the New Gorse at Draycot, and through Hose Wood. At this time, out of a large field there were only myself and Mr. Dobson struggling on. Hounds stuck to their fox, and killed him in the open. A good hunt all through, three hours and a half.

"*March* 29*th*, 1899. *Mucklestone.*—Drew the laurels at Oakley blank. Found and killed at Bellaport. Found in the Canridden. Had a nice little gallop, and ran him to ground near Woore Hall. Bolted a fox out of the made earth near the Canridden. Had a sharp burst, and beat us not far away. Found in Buerton Gorse—one I put down two years ago. Had a very good run by Adderley Gorse, Kynsall nearly to Buerton Gorse; then back to Kynsall and killed. Found in Golling's Rough. Had a very good thirty minutes, and ran to ground near to Golling's Rough. A good day. This was our best day's sport of the season on the Woore side. There was a good scent.

"*April* 4*th*, 1899. *Charnes Hall.*—Drew Charnes blank. Found a brace in the Bromley Coverts, and ran them both to ground. Drew the hilly part of Bishop's Woods, Sugnall, Wincote Wood, and Walton Gorse blank. Found a very good fox at Badenhall, and had a good run, one hour and twenty minutes, by Hilcote Wood nearly to Chebsey, back by Hilcote Hall, over the river to Eccleshall; then by Acton Hill and Walton Hurst to Ranton Woods, in the Albrighton country, and, owing to darkness, we gave him up at Seighford. Owing to not having the earths stopped at Bromley, the foxes soon slipped in. The run from Badenhall came a little too late in the day. It was a very nice hunt, this making my hundred and sixth day this season, and not missed one day's hunting, but should have liked the hounds to have rolled this fox over. It would have been nearly the run of the season."

This was the concluding day of the season of 1898–99, and much above the average April closing day. Record: seventy-eight foxes killed, fifty-nine run to ground, a hundred and six days' hunting altogether. Subscriptions amounted to £2390. The Poultry and Covert Fund absorbed £453, and nearly £600 were spent in removing wire and laying down about nine miles of fences on fifty-one farms, but the bulk of this was done at the expense of the Duke of Sutherland.

## CHAPTER XVI.

MEMBERS OF THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT—MR. R. N. WOOD—SIR G. CHETWODE—CAPTAIN EDWARDS-HEATHCOTE—SIR D. L. BROUGHTON—MR. BASIL FITZHERBERT—MR. FITZHERBERT BROCKHOLES—MR. H. CHAPLIN—SIR C. M. WOLSELEY.

Mr. Reginald Newcome Wood, of Bignall End, is a sterling sportsman who has been hunting with these hounds for more years than he would perhaps care to count, and has always gone in the front rank—a capital sportsman, with his heart in the right place; a first-class rider to hounds, with a thorough knowledge of the noble science, usually well mounted, and whose motto is, "Be with them I will." He has had some very good horses, and has generally taught them nearly all they know, and at the present time, after more than thirty years' experience, he is going as well as ever. Moreover, he has done excellent service to the Hunt, as honorary secretary of the Covert Fund for upwards of thirty years, and for several years he was joint honorary secretary with Mr. A. Simpson to the Hunt Committee—altogether an invaluable coadjutor to the Master and to the Hunt. The present writer is deeply indebted to Mr. Wood for much kind help and information for the purposes of this work. Mr. Wood married Miss Emily Anne Davenport, of Maer Hall.

Sir George Chetwode, of Oakley, is one of the veteran members of the Hunt, and one of its best supporters, both as a fox-preserver and generous subscriber to the Hunt funds, and, until quite recently, as a keen follower of the sport. Sir George, as is well known, in his younger days has seen much service, having been in the Crimean War, and also in the Indian Mutiny, with his regiment, the 8th Hussars, of which he was Lieut.-Colonel before his retirement. His first acquaintance with the North Staffordshire Hounds began in 1861, on his return from India, and he hunted with them regularly until he married Miss Alice Bass in 1868, when he went to live in the Meynell country, and hunted there till 1874, when, after succeeding to the baronetcy and the family estate at Oakley, he came into residence there, and hunted regularly with the North Staffordshire Hounds, going as well as anybody, until about three or four years ago, when the joint effect of "Anno Domini" and a hunting accident stopped him. Sir George has always found foxes for us at Oakley, and there are few who deserve more regard and gratitude from the Hunt. The writer is glad to know that Sir George Chetwode's two sons—both serving their country, one in the army, and the other in the navy—are keen sportsmen, and hunt whenever they get a chance, and bid fair to follow in their father's footsteps, who has been well known for years' as a fine all-round sportsman.

Captain J. H. Edwards-Heathcote was a familiar figure in the North Staffordshire hunting-field for many years, until Parliamentary duties and change of residence severed the connection. He was the zealous honorary secretary of the Hunt from 1876 to 1885, and no one was more regular in his attendance at the meets, or fonder of the sport than he was, for something like twenty years. At that time he was living at Apedale Hall, his place near Newcastle, and did his three days a week regularly with the North Stafford, always having two good weight-carriers out each day, and seeing as much sport and enjoying it as much as any one. He was always a cheery and amusing companion out hunting, and the regret was general when the Fates, in the shape of smoky ironworks and coal-pits, drove him from North Staffordshire to seek a more congenial residence further south. Captain

Col. Nugent, M.F.H.

*Photo by Maull & Fox.*

Col. R. J. M. Buller.

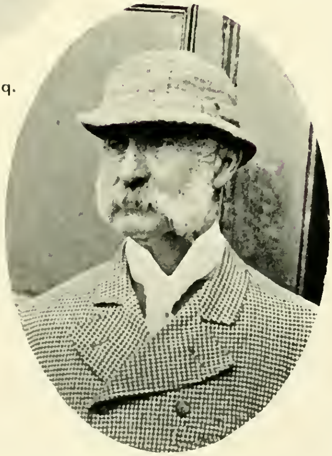
*Photo by Edwards.*

R. N. Wood, Esq.

*Photo by Hughes & Mullins.*

J. W. Philips, Esq.

*Photo by Hawker.*



Sir George Chetwode, Bart.

*Photo by Arnold.*

Heathcote was returned for North-West Staffordshire in 1886, but retired from parliamentary life at the General Election in 1892. His regiment was the 63rd (West Suffolk, now Manchester Regiment). Captain Heathcote joined in 1863, and retired in 1870, "without ever," as he writes, "having run the slightest risk of perforation."

Another of our regular followers, Mr. Lovatt Ayshford Wise, of Clayton Hall, near Trentham, was going for somewhere about the same period as Captain Edwards-Heathcote, and very well he used to go across country, riding good well-bred cattle, and, being a nice light weight, he generally held a good place in a quick thing. He was a resolute horseman, with good nerve, fond of a jump, and particularly partial to timber. He too left the district some time in the eighties, and, we believe, then gave up hunting.

Sir Delves Louis Broughton, of Doddington Park, is one of the best friends and supporters of the Hunt. He owns a large estate in the neighbourhood of Doddington, Woore, and Checkley, and there is no landowner to whom the Hunt is more indebted for fox-preservation and for sport than to Sir Delves Broughton, whose coverts are always open to the Hunt, and have been responsible for any number of good gallops. As he is not himself a specially keen or zealous rider to hounds, there is all the more reason that his unfailing and unselfish support of the Hunt should be duly acknowledged.

Mr. H. Ker Colville, of Bellaport, also deserves special mention as a fox-preserving landowner, whose coverts generally provide the right article, and who has for years been in every way a kind and liberal supporter of the Hunt, although he now no longer rides to hounds.

Mr. Basil Fitzherbert, of Swynnerton, may be included in the same category as one of the fox-preserving landowners to whom the Hunt is greatly indebted for much sport obtained through the kindly and unselfish action of those who have given up following hounds on their own account. Mr. Fitzherbert has had several sons fond of the chase who have lately been serving their country in South Africa, and who, we may hope, will return now that peace is secured, to take their places as of old in the hunting-field. Mr. Fitzherbert owns some of the largest and best-known coverts in the North Staffordshire country, such as Swynnerton Old Park and Harley Thorn, well known for many years as strongholds for foxes. Both these large woodlands are near Trentham, and adjoin the Duke's estate.

Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes, younger brother of Mr. Basil Fitzherbert, was for years an ardent and zealous member of the Hunt, and not only distinguished himself as a thorough sportsman and capital man across country, but for several years he did yeoman service as hon. secretary to the Hunt, and won golden opinions for his courteous and tactful performance of the duties of the office. Moreover, during the season of 1886–87, when the present Duke, then Marquis of Stafford, was away on his tour round the world, Mr. Fitzherbert-Brockholes had to undertake the serious responsibilities of Mastership, and right well did he acquit himself in that capacity, as all old members of the Hunt are fully aware.

The present writer is under great obligation to Mr. Brockholes for most kind and generous help in the compilation of the early history of the North Stafford Hunt, and for giving free access, not only to his hunting diaries and manuscripts, but also for allowing him to embody in the present volume the substance of three excellent articles on the early history of the North Stafford Hounds, which Mr. Brockholes contributed in the year 1891 to the *Staffordshire Advertiser*. It was a matter of considerable regret to the members of the Hunt that the long and pleasant connection between the late hon. secretary and the Hunt had to be severed when the claims of property carried Mr. Brockholes off to Lancashire, to reside at his own place near Garstang, some years ago. The North Stafford Hunt is decidedly the poorer for the loss of his genial presence in the field.

No record of the North Stafford Hounds would be complete without some mention of the name of the Right Hon. Henry Chaplin, who, through his marriage in 1876 with Lady Florence Leveson-Gower, became closely connected with the Master, and with the North Stafford country. Mr. Chaplin is too well known in the hunting world, and in the domain of sport generally, to require any detailed description here. But it will not be out of place to refer to him, not merely as a fine rider and ideal sportsman, but as having a claim on our gratitude by reason of his having given material assistance to his brother-in-law, the present Duke of Sutherland, in helping to build up the admirable pack of hounds now at Trentham by the loan of Blankney sires from time to time, and for valuable advice and help generally in the matter of hound-breeding. Few men have had more experience in hound-breeding and hunt-management than Mr. Chaplin. At one time he and the late Lord Henry Bentinck hunted the whole of the Blankney and Burton country six days a week, and after Lord Henry Bentinck's death, Mr. Chaplin hunted the country for several years single-handed. As to his performances across country, they are too well known for description here. Are they not written in the chronicles of the Warwickshire, and the Meynell, and elsewhere, including his historic jump over the Mill Dam at Foston? We have referred elsewhere to the early and much-lamented death of Lady Florence Chaplin, which happened within five years of her marriage. It is a satisfaction to know that this sad event has not weakened the ties between the two families, and the members of the Hunt hail with pleasure the presence of Mr. Chaplin and his son and daughters with the North Stafford Hounds from time to time, on the occasion of their visits to Trentham. "Will" Boxall, our present huntsman, came from Mr. Chaplin to Trentham in 1877, and Will's father was for years stud groom at Blankney, where he had charge of a large and valuable stud of racehorses and hunters, and earned a great name for able management of the very large stud, sometimes, as we are informed, amounting to about one hundred and fifty horses. Hermit, the winner of the historic Derby in 1867, was at one time under his care.

Lord Berkeley Paget ought to be referred to as one of the brilliant sportsmen who used occasionally to be seen with the North Stafford Hounds, and who never came out when there was anything to be done without distinguishing himself, no matter what horse he might be riding. The writer well remembers his being mounted one day, when on a visit at Ingestre in the days of the late Earl of Shrewsbury, on a good grey horse, which had always been classed as a good fencer, but not remarkable for pace. With Lord Berkeley up, however, the horse was always in front in the quick gallop we happened to get that day, and the gallant grey suddenly developed pace, as well as jumping powers, so that most of us had the pleasure of following in his wake throughout the run. Lord Berkeley Paget has seen as much brilliant sport in the shires and elsewhere as any one, and has had sundry adventures by flood and field, amongst which we may give the following, which appeared in a local paper of the time—some twenty years ago :—

> "Lord Berkeley Paget, who is hunting with the Cheshire Hounds, has had a narrow escape of his life. His lordship was leading the field, when the hounds, pushing the fox, drove him across the Weaver, which was considerably swollen. Lord Berkeley Paget, without hesitation, plunged into the river and endeavoured to reach the opposite bank with the hounds. The current was running too rapidly for this to be effected, and horse and rider were washed down the stream. Lord Berkeley Paget thus became unseated, and a scene of excitement ensued, the huntsmen thronging the bank to assist his lordship, who, after a protracted struggle, effected a landing, though much exhausted in the effort. His hunter was also recovered shortly afterwards. Beyond the unpleasant effects of a prolonged immersion, Lord Berkeley Paget has happily taken no harm from the alarming accident."

Sir Charles Michael Wolseley, of Wolseley, used, in years gone by, to be one of our regular followers, and from 1870 to 1877, or thereabouts, was seldom absent from our meets. A good sportsman, and a plucky rider, it seems a pity that he should have given up the noble sport so early in life before being appreciably handicapped by age or weight. He owned some good horses from time to time, and made the most of them in many a quick thing. One of the best, perhaps, was an Irish horse, a light bay, Wicklow, a cobby little horse, and as clever as a cat. He also had a good grey mare, Heroine, a wonderful jumper. Sir Charles Wolseley's place is close to Cannock Chase, and is one of the few parks boasting an ancient deer-leap. The right to enclose a park and make a deer-leap was granted to Ralph Wolseley by Edward the Fourth, the deed of grant being now in the possession of the present baronet. The family is one of the oldest in the country. Burke's Peerage says—

> "There still remain in England a few families, and Wolseley of Wolseley is one, that can prove by authentic evidence an unbroken descent from Saxon times, and show the inheritance of the same lands in the male line from a period long anterior to the Norman conquest. A legend in the family narrates that their ancestor was given the lands of Wiselie (now Wolseley) for destroying wolves in co. Stafford, in the reign of King Edgar, when wolves were finally destroyed in England."

The writer can give no opinion as to the accuracy of this legend as to wolves, but he can testify from personal observation that the present baronet used to be as keen as any one in assisting in the death of a fox. Shirley, in his "Deer Parks of England," says that this is the only park in England where these deer-leaps are still kept up. Those who are curious in such matters may find a full description in the "Staffordshire Collection" (Forest Rolls), or in Shirley's "Deer Parks."

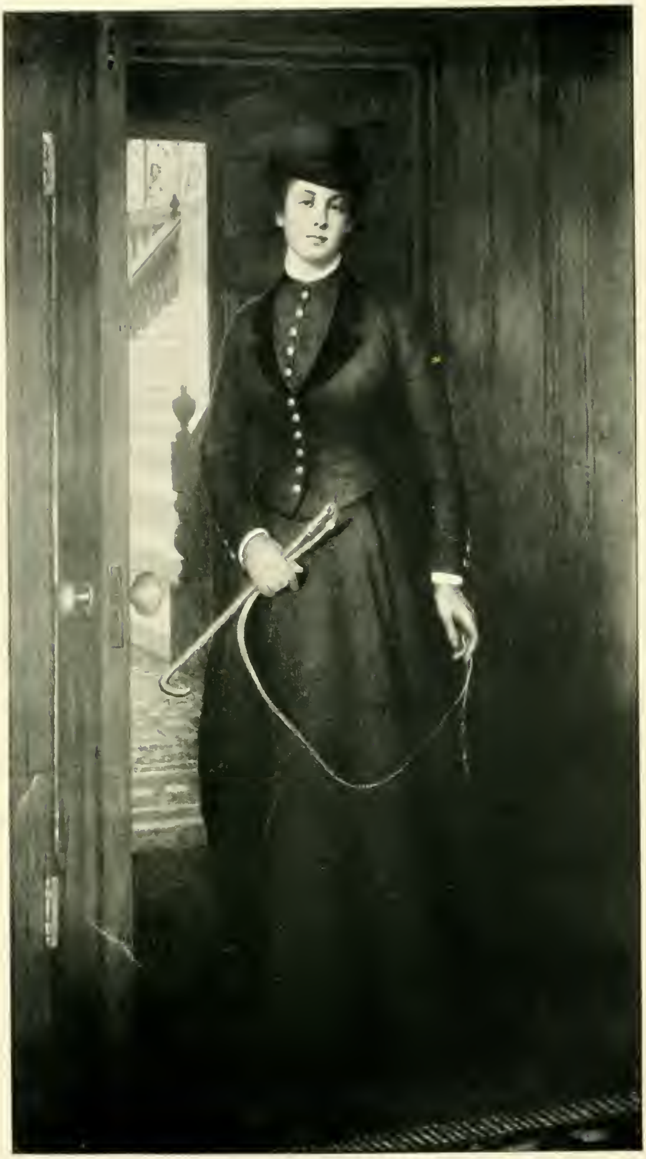
The North Stafford Hunt has generally been favoured with a fair proportion of lady members who can take care of themselves and hold their own across country. In Mr. Davenport's time no one went better than his daughters, most of whom were accomplished horsewomen, and devoted to the sport; in those days it was no uncommon sight to see five of them out with the hounds, all very well mounted, and going quite in the front rank. From one cause or another, Miss D. E. Davenport was the only one left to follow the sport in recent times, and we believe she has now quite lately given up hunting. We may say, speaking generally, that no ladies enjoyed hunting more thoroughly, and none knew more about it, than the ladies of the Davenport family.

The two Misses Adderley, of Barlaston Hall—afterwards Mrs. Andrew Corbet and Mrs. John Broughton—were well-known performers across country in the early days of which we are now speaking, and had not much to learn from any of the sterner sex. Both were admirable horsewomen, and until they married, and gradually gave up the sport, no one went better or saw more sport with the North Stafford Hounds than the ladies of Barlaston Hall.

We have elsewhere mentioned their brother, Mr. Ralph Thomas Adderley (better known as "Tom" Adderley), who kept a pack of harriers at Barlaston on his own account, and who for twenty years or more was in the full swing of most of the sport that was going on in North Staffordshire.

Then in the olden days, *i.e.* in the fifties and sixties, the field used often to be graced with the presence of Ladies Gertrude and Adelaide Talbot, who frequently came out on the Draycot and Sandon side with their father—then Lord Talbot—from Ingestre; and although these ladies were not such constant or such devoted followers as some of these we have just mentioned, yet they were thoroughly graduated in the school of sport, and always went well. Their father, Lord Talbot, afterwards the eighteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, was a well-known and determined rider to hounds, and on his Irish horse Blarney, which carried him well for many seasons, used often to show the way across the North Stafford country.

Coming to more recent times, no one who knows anything of fox-hunting in North Staffordshire upwards of twenty years ago, more especially with reference to the lady element in the Hunt, can help thinking of Lady Florence Chaplin, who for several years during her brother's Mastership was a constant and accomplished follower of his hounds. Up to the time of her marriage, in 1876, she was seldom absent from the



LADY FLORENCE CHAPLIN.

*From a painting by Edward Clifford at Stafford House.*

meet, and after that event until her lamented death, in 1881, we often had the pleasure of seeing Lady Florence out with our hounds on her frequent visits to Trentham. The writer is sure that every member of the Hunt whose memory carries him back to that period will agree that no presence was more welcome in the hunting-field than that of Lady Florence Chaplin. The news of her sudden and early death came as a sad shock to the members of the Hunt, and to every one who knew her. Lady Florence was an excellent horsewoman, always well mounted, and always determined to be with hounds.

With such parents, no one can be surprised to find that the rising generation of the house of Chaplin have inherited decided sporting tastes.

It would be something like presumption on the part of the present writer to say much more than he has already said of the present Duchess of Sutherland as a rider to hounds; but as we are now referring to lady members of the Hunt, we feel bound to record our opinion, which we believe will be shared generally by the members of the Hunt, that no one goes better, or with more courage, than her Grace, and that no one takes more interest in the sport, or does more to promote the prosperity of the Hunt, although it is known to all the world how much the Duchess's time and thoughts and sympathies are occupied with far higher and graver objects.

There are many ladies of the present day who go well with our hounds, but some of them possibly might prefer that their names should not be brought prominently forward. We may be pardoned, however, for briefly referring to such well-known names as those of Mrs. Ridgway and Mrs. Dobson, two sisters, who are regular followers and capital horsewomen; also to Mrs. Guy Knight, Mrs. John Knight, Mrs. Murphy, of Fradswell Hall, and Miss C. Wedgwood, who are no novices at the sport, and whose presence at the meet is ever welcome. Miss Thompson, of Walton Grange, Stone (now Mrs. McVitie, of Edinburgh), used to be a regular and enthusiastic follower before her marriage, and went remarkably well some twenty years ago.

Of present-day farmers who hunt, and are in every way staunch supporters, we may mention Messrs. R. S. Wilkinson (Swinchurch) and W. F. Wilkinson (Madeley), a sporting pair of brothers; also J. Blockley (Radwood), his son W. Blockley (Moor Hall), and Mrs. W. Blockley, a first-rate horsewoman, and two other sons; William Sillito (The Wellings) and his son; J. Bourne (Mucklestone) and several members of his family; John Nunnerley and his son (Buerton Hall), always well mounted and fond of the sport; W. and C. Wood (Wrinehill Hall); J. Icke (Lloyd Farm, near Market Drayton); E. Sandbach (Radwood); and H. Toon (Norton Bridge), whose farm adjoins the famous covert known as Shallowford Gorse, to whom the meet are much indebted for his care and pains in seeing to the covert being kept quiet. Besides these there is Mr. Edward Simpson, of Sidway, and Mr. R. D. Garde, of Biana, Eccleshall, although the latter can scarcely be classed as a farmer, pure and simple, seeing that he is an Irish landowner, with rents to collect from across the Channel. We ought to have mentioned before now the name of Mr. A. W. Radford-Norcop, of Betton, who, though neither a farmer nor a hunting man, has helped the Hunt very much for years in the matter of fox-preserving on his estate, and also by taking down wire and putting up low fencing. There are not many non-hunting men who do more for the Hunt, or who show a more friendly spirit towards the Master and the Hunt Committee. Nearly all the farmers we have just named have done excellent service for the Hunt in many ways; amongst other things, by working on the Covert Fund Committee, and examining the poultry claims, and the like. The writer only regrets that he has not a larger list of fox-hunting farmers to place before his readers, for after all the farmers are the backbone of any Hunt, and without their friendly help little good can be done either in the way of fox-preserving or fox-hunting. The writer is thoroughly persuaded of the generally friendly tone and feeling of the farmers of North Staffordshire towards the Hunt, and towards the Master; but if only farmers, as a general rule, were hunting men, that friendliness of tone and feeling would take a far more active and practical shape, and the Hunt would accordingly be the gainers.

A most distinguished Master of hounds and amateur huntsman, Mr. H. R. Corbet, of Adderley, whose recent loss has been so deeply and widely deplored, deserves more than a passing notice. Mr. Corbet, although his hands were fairly full with his own pack, the South Cheshire, was a member of the North Stafford Hunt Committee, and used regularly to come out with the North Stafford Hounds at their Monday meets. It is needless to say a word about his fine horsemanship, and his exceptional knowledge of, and experience in, the noble science; but beyond all this, we of the North Staffordshire Hunt owe him a debt of gratitude for many kindly acts, and for much friendliness and courtesy in connection with his coverts on the Adderley estate. At one time there was a certain amount of controversy on the subject, and had there been a less cordial and friendly feeling between the two Masters, serious friction might easily have arisen; but it is only due to Mr. Corbet's memory to say, that no one could have behaved with more consideration and good feeling towards a neighbouring Hunt than Mr. Corbet did on the occasion in question, nor with more thorough loyalty to the unwritten laws of fox-hunting. His merits as a Master of hounds and huntsmen are so universally known, that it would be out of place to dwell upon them in detail here, but we may perhaps be allowed to quote from an appreciative notice which appeared in *Bailey's Magazine* for June, 1902. The writer says—

"It is needless to tell those who followed Mr. Corbet that he many years ago proved himself to be one of the best of amateur huntsmen. He had a marvellously quick eye with his hounds, and, after his long experience, knew the run of every fox in the country. He hunted his hounds with unlimited patience when there was need for it, and with the utmost dash when it was called for.

As a horseman he was unsurpassed. Since he took the South Cheshire country he rather clung to the horses he liked, but in his early days he was accustomed to sell annually, and the Cheshire sales, as they were called, were well attended by those who did not mind paying a good price for a horse of quality who thoroughly knew his business. The average prices realized were high, and sums of two hundred guineas and upwards were by no means uncommon. No keener man than Mr. Corbet ever cheered a hound. He was an excellent companion, full of anecdote and quaint sayings. Mr. Corbet (who died on May 4th, 1902) was buried at Adderley, all the prominent followers of the hounds and landowners attending as a mark of respect to so good a sportsman."

There was a general impression in the North Stafford Hunt that a certain rivalry existed as to horsemanship and handling of hounds between the late Mr. Corbet and Stephen Dickins, and sundry stories were told illustrating this; but it is beyond all question that the two men were such thorough sportsmen, that each must have had a real respect for the good qualities of the other, and it scarcely seems worth while to perpetuate any jokes or chaff which may have passed current at the time, but which were never meant to have more than an ephemeral existence.

Mr. F. R. Twemlow, of Peatswood, both as a hunting man and landowner, is entitled to a niche in the temple of fame in connection with the Hunt. Until his regiment—the 4th North Stafford Regiment of Militia—volunteered for active service in South Africa early in the year 1900, he was a constant and prominent follower, and his coverts on the Market Drayton side have often given us a good gallop. Now that he has recently returned to this country, it is to be hoped that he will often be seen with the old pack in his usual place, well in front.

Major Stamer (16th Lancers), who now acts as joint Master with the Duke, and as deputy Master in his Grace's absence, has for years been a well-known and valuable member of the Hunt, and has earned the regard of the field by his tactful and courteous conduct on all occasions when doing duty as field Master. He is a thorough sportsman, devoted to the Hunt, and does an immense amount of work for it of a quiet and unobtrusive kind, for which he scarcely gets as much credit as he deserves. He is at the present time joint hon. secretary with Mr. A. Simpson, in addition to undertaking work in the field as joint Master, with a considerable amount of committee work thrown in.

To Mr. Alexander Simpson, who unites in his own person the duties of the Duke's private secretary with those of joint hon. secretary to the Hunt Committee, the North Stafford Hunt are deeply indebted. This gentleman, it is not too much to say, has the whole business of the Hunt at his finger-ends, and has always kept on the best terms with the farmers of the district. The entire correspondence of the Hunt goes through his hands, and the present writer has the best reason to know that it is in no small degree owing to Mr. Simpson's tact and discretion that matters progress with so little friction and unpleasantness in the North Stafford Hunt. Mr. Simpson is, besides all this, a thorough sportsman, and enjoys a gallop across country as much as any one, and we may say of him, without fear of contradiction, that he is emphatically the right man in the right place.

The present writer is much indebted to Mr. Simpson for valuable help in preparing this volume for publication, and for free access to huntsmen's diaries and the official chronicles of the Hunt, without which his task would have been almost impracticable.

Two good sportsmen have lately disappeared from the North Stafford country—the brothers Heath—James Heath, M.P., and Arthur Howard Heath, M.P. Both lived in North Staffordshire until the last few years, and were regular attendants at the covert side. Politics, unfortunately, have proved more attractive than sport, and the claims of Parliament and the necessity of living elsewhere have deprived the North Stafford Hunt of two of our sterling sportsmen. Mr. A. H. Heath has lately bought Newbold Revel, a very charming place near Rugby, and no doubt often enjoys a gallop with the Warwickshire in his new quarters. It was a matter of great regret amongst the fox-hunting fraternity when the connection between the Heath family and the North

Stafford Hunt was unavoidably severed. Mr. Arthur Heath was a well-known cricketer, and played for Oxford *v.* Cambridge for four years in the later seventies.

If we were asked to name two of the hardest and foremost riders to hounds of the present day with the North Stafford pack, we should be inclined, from all we have seen and heard, to single out Mr. W. W. Dobson, of Seighford Hall, and Mr. F. Vaughan-Williams, of Eccleshall Castle. Mr. Dobson came into the country as a youngster more than twenty years ago, and soon showed not only that he was a capable, but a determined rider, and it did not seem to matter much what his mount was, for whatever he was he had to gallop and jump with the best of them. The writer remembers the late Mr. Corbet saying of him, quite in his early days, "If that youngster had but my experience with his nerve, what a clinker he would be!" Well, since then the experience has come, and the nerve has not diminished, and Mr. Corbet's prediction has been fulfilled. Mr. Dobson joined the Hunt in his *première jeunesse* about twenty-one years ago, riding in those early days some raw youngsters, with which he did wonders by dint of pluck and natural horsemanship. He has told the writer that on his first day with these hounds from Madeley, in November, 1881, neither he nor his mare being used to a ditch-and-bank country, he took no less than three falls, and finally had to get the assistance of a ploughman with his team to draw the mare out of a boggy ditch, somewhere between Wrinehill Wood and Finson's Hay Gorse. It did not take him long to get well entered to our ditch-and-bank country, and since those days he has often led the field in many a rattling gallop, having developed into an experienced and excellent horseman, and for years past he has ridden the best of cattle, and has given long prices for some of them. With youth and vigour still on his side, he bids fair to go on for years in the first flight, and to hold his own with all comers. His best horses have been Polly, a brown mare by

Exchequer, ridden regularly from 1881 to 1887; also a grand chestnut horse, Leicester, by Mainstay, which Mr. Dobson considers the best horse he ever owned or rode. He stood 16.3, and was not remarkable for his looks, except that he had wonderful bone and power. The last three seasons his owner rode him he gave him only two falls, and he can confidently say he never rode a horse more liberally. He was going from 1887 to 1893. Then there was a beautiful brown Irish mare, Enterprise, bought from the late Mr. Joseph Peake, which carried Mr. Dobson very well from 1894 to 1898. This mare was put up to auction after winning a selling race at Woore. She only ran in two races in her life, and won both times. From 1899 to 1901, Gamester and Gamble, two half-brothers by Lord Maldon, were especial favourites, and it is difficult to say which was the better of the two. They are the same colour, and very much alike. We have already mentioned Mrs. Dobson, as well known amongst ladies who follow these hounds, and it is pleasant to know that there are two of the rising generation already following faithfully in their parents' footsteps.

Mr. F. Vaughan-Williams, of Eccleshall Castle, is a recent addition to the ranks of the North Staffordshire Hunt, having only come to reside in the county about five years since. He came, however, with a considerable reputation as a fox-hunter and sportsman of experience, and an ex-Master of foxhounds, having been Master of the Tedworth from 1885 to 1888, the North Hereford from 1893 to 1895, and the Galway Blazers from 1895 to 1897. With the two last-named packs he carried the horn. Mr. Vaughan-Williams has well maintained his reputation as a first-class performer across country during the few seasons he has hunted with our hounds; no one goes straighter or with a more thorough knowledge of the sport and its science, and he is always to be seen well in front in a quick thing. His favourite horses are Hollymount, an Irish thoroughbred bay horse; Cornflower, a clever grey; and Cobweb, a black, all of which were Galway Hunt horses, and soon mastered the art of crossing the North Stafford country. Mr. Vaughan-Williams has, in his time, ridden with more than forty packs of hounds, and thinks the North Stafford country one of the most sporting and best scenting countries he has known. He considers that the North Staffordshire Hounds combine looks, work, and breeding in a high degree.

Of landowning fox-hunters of the younger generation mention should be made of Sir Hill Child, the second Baronet, of Stallington Hall, whose coverts at Stallington constantly afford a good gallop, and who himself enjoys the sport as much as any one, when not kept away by military duties. Sir Hill Child returned from South Africa some months ago from service with his regiment, the Irish Guards.

Mr. Ralph Donaldson-Hudson, too, of Cheswardine Hall, on the Market Drayton side, is in much the same category, and deserves honourable mention as a young landowner of fox-preserving and fox-hunting proclivities, whose coverts generally hold the right animal, and who follows hounds himself with keenness and enjoyment.

Mr. Ralph Sneyd, of Keele Hall, was at one time joint Field Master with the Duke, and, if only he regularly resided at his Staffordshire home, would be an invaluable member of the Hunt. Unfortunately, however, for some time past Mr. Sneyd has not lived at Keele, which has been recently let to the Grand Duke Michael of Russia, and it is quite a long time since Mr. Sneyd has been seen out with the North Stafford; but his Keele coverts are seldom drawn blank, and the Keele keepers have solved the problem of preserving foxes as well as pheasants, to the satisfaction of every one concerned. Needless to add that so true a sportsman as Mr. Sneyd will be welcomed by every member of the Hunt whenever it may suit him to rejoin the old pack.

Lord Henry Grosvenor, who a few years since came to live at Tittensor Chase, a charming place on the

Trentham estate, has been a welcome addition of late years to the Hunt. He is a fairly constant and a zealous follower on his side of the country, and a valued member of the Hunt Committee.

Lord Crewe, although his residence (Crewe Hall) is in the Cheshire country, owns extensive coverts in the North Stafford country, which have often given us good sport. Lord Crewe, though not very often able to hunt with the North Staffordshire Hounds, is a staunch supporter of the Hunt, and a member of the committee whose help and advice in council are often given and always highly esteemed.

Mr. Frank Behrens, whose sudden death on the way home from hunting at the close of last season shocked so many friends, was a steady supporter of the Hunt, a subscriber to the funds, and was seen out constantly at the Monday meets on the Woore and Doddington side, although the Cheshire Hounds naturally had the first claim upon his allegiance.

If space permitted, we should like to dwell upon a number of other names of fox-hunters more or less known to fame with the North Staffordshire Hounds, but we must content ourselves with a passing reference to many good sportsmen and true who have hunted with these hounds, and supported the Hunt for some years with zeal and distinction. Amongst them we may name Mr. Thompson, of Walton Grange, Stone, a veteran member of the Hunt, and a good sportsman; Mr. Mynors, of Little Ingestre, who a few years ago used to ride with great success in the first flight, both with the North Stafford and the Meynell; Mr. E. A. Ridgway, of Tittensor; Mr. Kirkham, Mr. Birch (Stone), Mr. F. G. Mather (Betley), Mr. Guy Knight and Mr. John Knight, Mr. H. A. Wiggin (Walton Hall), Mr. E. J. W. Wood (Meece House), Mr. W. E. Bowers (Caverswall Castle), Mr. Challinor (Shallowford House), and Mr. Leedam (the Leasows), all of whom are well known and esteemed as genuine sportsmen and good supporters. Mr. Bowers planted a gorse some years ago at Nobut for the Hunt, which, however, has not been quite a success, owing in great measure to its being a long way from any other covert. We have elsewhere referred to Mr. Harrison, of Maer Hall, as one of our good supporters and fox-preservers.

Mr. James Taylor, of Springfield Hall, Whitmore, was a well-known and conspicuous figure in the North Stafford hunting-field for a good many years. He was a big, burly man, weighing probably fully twenty stone, jocular and genial, a quaint figure on a horse, always in scarlet, generally wearing his coat unbuttoned, with a light waistcoat and black butcher boots, and usually a flower in his buttonhole, looking the very picture of "Father Christmas." He could not ride anything but a weight-carrier; but he never galloped and never jumped, and yet, through his good knowledge of the country and natural shrewdness in riding to points, he managed to see something of what was going on, and enjoyed himself in his characteristic way.

He was a successful railway contractor, who had been connected with many important undertakings. He was born at Whitmore about the year 1816, and left home as a lad of thirteen to work on the Grand Junction Canal. He was entirely a self-made man, and had a large share of the shrewdness and energy which generally characterizes men of that stamp. In the Hunt he was generally known as "Navvy Taylor." He was an amusing companion, full of humour and anecdote, and, take him for all in all, was a man who will not easily be forgotten in the North Staffordshire Hunt.

He died in the year 1891, leaving behind him a large family and very considerable property. He was a member of the Hunt, from first to last, for about forty years.

The late Mr. Cartlich (Manor House, Woore) was for years a most hospitable and kindly member of the Hunt, whose house was always open to sportsmen of every degree when the meet was on the Woore side; he was, moreover, thoroughly fond of the sport, and in every respect a valued friend and supporter. His son, Mr. Thomas Cartlich, has followed in his father's footsteps, and keeps up the good traditions of the house.

Mr. James Meakin (Westwood Manor, Leek) and his cousin, Mr. George Meakin (Cresswell Hall, Stafford), until the last few years, were well-known members of the Hunt, and constantly seen at the covert side, but, to the general regret, have recently dropped out of the ranks. For upwards of two years past Mr. Cecil Wedgwood has been out in South Africa with the 4th North Staffordshire Regiment of Militia, but now that his military duties are over no doubt he will come out again and enjoy the sport as heretofore.

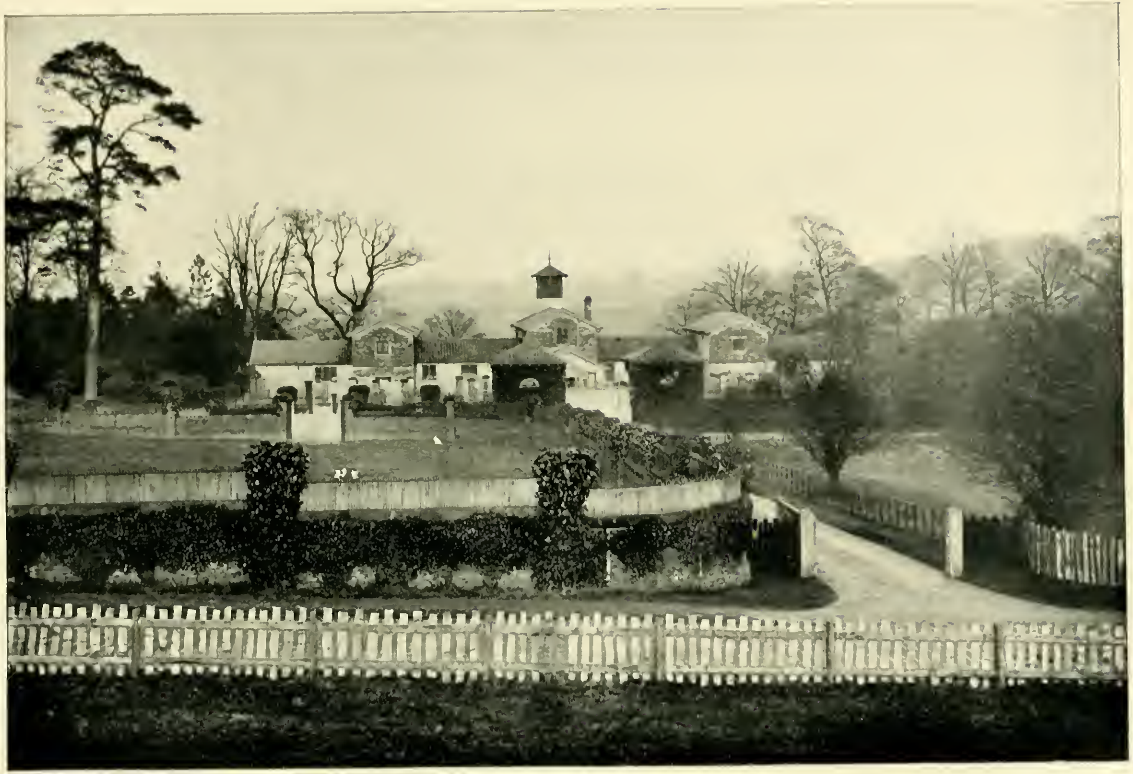
The North Staffordshire Hunt has had many distinguished members from time to time outside the limits of its own country, particularly from amongst sportsmen who usually hunt with the Cheshire, but who often throw in their lot with the North Stafford on the Woore and Doddington side. Amongst them we may mention the Earl of Hopetoun, the Marquis of Waterford, Lord Petersham (now the Earl of Harrington), and Baron Schröder. Up to about a dozen years ago Mr. C. F. Tinsley was a well-known figure in the North Staffordshire hunting-field. A bold and successful horseman, remarkable for riding across country with unusually long stirrups, he was a cheery sportsman, always welcome at the covert side, and one who always meant business when hounds were running. We have elsewhere mentioned Mr. James Hall (Kynsal Lodge, Audlem) as a veteran member of the Hunt and keen sportsman, who still sticks to the old pack and enjoys the good old sport as much as ever.

Lieut.-Colonel B. H. Philips (23rd Welsh Fusiliers) ought to be mentioned as a first-rate man across country, who only too seldom joins these hounds on the Draycot side. Mr. J. Challinor (Leek) also until recent years was a fairly constant and welcome follower.

# CHAPTER XVII.

## KENNELS AND STABLES.

THE kennels at Trentham, as the plan and the photograph will show, are as good and complete as any in the country, although they may be said to owe their existence to something very like an accident or a misunderstanding. It seems that some time in the forties, in the day of the second Duke, who was a quiet scholarly man, with no sporting tastes of any kind, he was spoken to by his eldest son (then Marquis of Stafford, afterwards the third Duke), on the eve of the father's going abroad for some months, with a view to obtaining permission to enlarge the modest kennels which then housed a few spaniels and sporting dogs belonging to the Marquis; leave was given without much consideration on the Duke's part, and without going into detail as to plans and cost, and as Sir Charles Barry was then at Trentham, engaged on elaborate alterations and additions to the house, Lord Stafford made the most of his golden opportunity, and on the Duke's return, some months afterwards, to his surprise and chagrin, he found that the extensive and elaborate kennels which now so well house the North Stafford pack of hounds, had been erected in his absence, regardless of expense. So well had the work been done, and so thoroughly, that when, in 1862, the hounds were moved from Wolstanton to Trentham, it was found that very little need be added in order to provide for the accommodation of some fifty or sixty couple of hounds. It is quite impossible to exaggerate the importance to the Hunt of this generous



VIEW OF THE KENNELS, TRENTHAM.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

gift of the kennels and the Hunt servants' quarters, by the third Duke of Sutherland, especially when it is remembered that for many years his Grace took very little part in the hunting-field. Hunting-men in North Staffordshire should never forget the debt of gratitude they owe, not only to the present Duke, but also to his father, for their remarkable liberality in this respect. In a neighbouring Hunt (the Meynell), the cost to the members of the Hunt, of providing kennels and stables, and cottages for the Hunt servants, amounted to upwards of £12,000, equivalent to a perpetual payment of nearly £500 a year, and but for the exceptional generosity of the Sutherland family, something like the sum above mentioned would represent the cost to the North Stafford Hunt subscribers of supplying the necessary Hunt buildings. The question, however, is not to be regarded solely as a money question; if the whole of the North Staffordshire country was examined with a view to finding the most convenient and appropriate site for the Hunt kennels, it is obvious that no better site than Trentham could be found for the purpose. It is not only that Trentham is as nearly in the centre of the Hunt as possible, but in every way, for exercising-ground, for water and drainage, for size and airiness, and for all that makes for healthiness in hound management, the Trentham kennels are second to none that we know of in the country. That these advantages should be conferred upon the North Stafford Hunt, free of cost and trouble, surely deserves more than a mere passing word of acknowledgment. The kennels at Trentham are about a quarter of a mile from the Hall, on gently rising ground, with a sunny southern or south-eastern aspect, selected, apparently, with a due regard to Somerville's advice, who says a kennel should always be built—

"Upon some little eminence erect,
And fronting to the ruddy dawn, its courts
On either hand wide-opening to receive
The sun's all-cheering beams."

The site is on the outskirts of the park on the Hanford, or northern, side of the Hall and grounds, with ample grass yards for exercise, and any amount of open turf land adjoining. The three essentials mentioned in the Badminton volume on hunting have certainly been well observed. The kennels are eminently dry, airy, and warm. As the *Badminton* writer truly says—

> "Sweetness and light are as vital to the proper well-being of the hound as we are so often reminded they are to his master; nay, it may be said that, in proportion, they are even more so, for while some men do certainly in this world contrive to get on without them, we are very sure no hound can. It must never be forgotten that both the horses and the hounds used for the chase are a very different sort of animals from what they are in their natural state. Their state is one not of nature, but of art, a highly artificial state; they differ as much after their kind, from the nag who picks up his living off a common, or from the village cur, as their masters differ from the Digger Indians, or the aboriginals of the Australian bush. The man of civilization who lives in a damp, ill-drained, ill-ventilated house will never be able to do his work properly, even if he can get through life at all. And it is the same with horse and hound."

A glance at the photograph of the kennels will show that the building is in the Italian style, in keeping with the architecture of the Hall and the rest of the buildings connected with the residence and grounds. Sir C. Barry having, as we have already explained, *carte blanche* in the matter of cost, spared no expense in making the kennels, not only sufficient for their purpose, but also an ornament to the place, and a credit to his own reputation as an architect. An examination of the ground-plan will show that the accommodation is unusually ample for a pack of from fifty to sixty couples of hounds, which is the average strength of the North Stafford pack. There are four large lodging-houses in which the dog and bitch packs are separately housed, all opening into roomy paved yards, with two smaller lodging-houses for the young hounds of both sexes, opening into smaller paved yards. An ample supply of water is laid on for each yard, and the drainage and ventilation are admirably provided for. There are three roomy grass yards close to for exercise (the largest of which is not shown on the kennel plan), and, without going more into detail, it may safely be said that nothing appears to have been overlooked, or omitted, which can add to the health and comfort of the hounds. The Master has been eminently fortunate, too, in having at the head of affairs such able kennel huntsmen and managers as the late Stephen Dickins and Will Boxall, the present huntsman, who have always been most careful and successful in their kennel management. At the present moment Boxall is ably seconded by his whippers-in, A. Shepherd and E. Jones, who have now been some time in the service, and have proved themselves excellent lieutenants. There are several bedrooms above the kennels for feeders and Hunt servants, and the kennels, as a matter of course, are never left unprotected day or night. The cooking-house arrangements appear to be excellent, and the conclusion any one would arrive at after inspecting the Trentham kennels would probably be that it is well to be a North Stafford foxhound, if you want a comfortable, or even a luxurious, life. There are several small lodging-houses and kennels adapted for the accouchement of members of the lady pack, one of which, on the occasion of our last visit, was tenanted by a matron with a newly arrived litter of thirteen. The houses for the Hunt servants are conveniently placed near the kennels, and most pleasantly situated away from the high-road and amongst the private grounds of the estate. Boxall's house is an ideal huntsman's residence, with charming, snug rooms, full of interesting photographs and hunting souvenirs. Some of the best hounds now in the kennels are Cloister, by Warbler—Constance, Warbler by Warwickshire Wildboy—Nimble Constance, by Meynell Colonel—Verity; Hazard, by Alderman—Hopeful, Alderman by Brocklesby Acrobat—Wonderful; Factor, by Cheshire Trifler—Festive; Chimer, by Warbler—Constance (see above; Chimer and Cloister are own brothers); Grafton, by Gainsboro'—Frolic; and Ringwood, by Chimer—Rarity. Ringwood is a young hound full of promise, winner of the first prize for 1902. Hazard and Grafton are three years old, and good workers; Cloister is five years old, Chimer four, and Factor two years old, and all are capital hounds both for speed and nose.

We print photographs of all the six hounds above named; Chimer is the light-coloured hound. The group of five are the five first-prize hounds in succession, rather a record. Boxall says of them that they are all very good in their work.

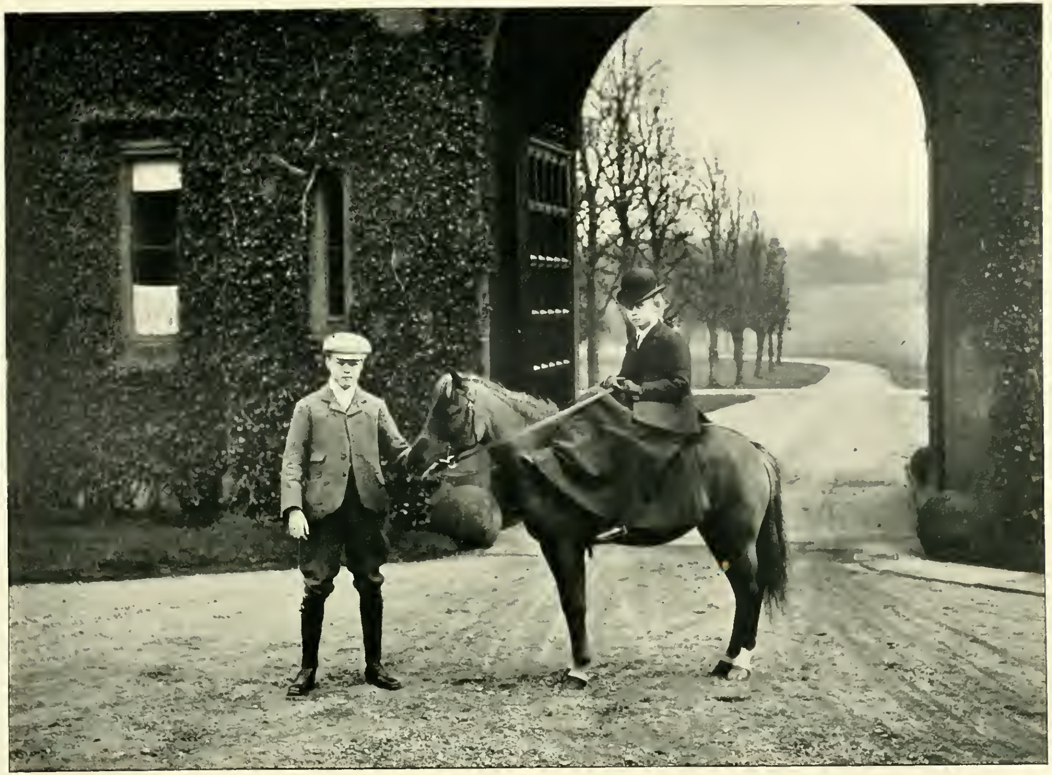
The Hunt stables are about five minutes' walk from the kennels, in the village, fronting the Stoke and Newcastle road, on the site where the old village inn and the inn stables stood before the removal of the licence and the building of a new hotel near to the Trentham Railway Station. Altogether something like sixty hunters represent the usual Hunt stud at Trentham, and the present lot (numbering sixty-two) do credit to the management of Mr. G. Percival, the stud groom who succeeded Norman when the latter was pensioned off something like three years ago. The present writer had an opportunity, quite recently, of inspecting the Hunt horses under the guidance of Percival, and found them a very good-looking and useful lot. They are kept partly in the Hunt stables in the village already mentioned, and partly in the stables at the Hall, something like half in each place, and are summered in loose boxes at the two places mentioned, and part in roomy loose boxes at the "Paddocks" near the golf-links at Trentham. We understand the Duke's chief favourites at the present time are Pickles, a brown horse eight years old, and Whissendine, a chestnut of the same age, both well-bred horses with plenty of bone and quality, and well up to the Duke's weight, with a little to spare. There was also a compact little chestnut horse, Guinea Pig, which took our fancy as the right sort of animal for the North Staffordshire country, and we are told he is a very promising performer, but he was only bought the latter end of last season. The Duchess has generally six good upstanding horses for her own riding, of which The Laird, a dark chestnut by Clanronald, and Czar took our fancy as much as any; but they are all full of quality, and look quite as much like Leicestershire as North Staffordshire horses. The Duke keeps an entire thoroughbred horse for the gratuitous use of the farmers in the North Stafford country. The present stud horse is Strathnaver by Galopin—Snood. We are told that this boon is much appreciated and freely used by the sporting farmers of the district.

Amongst the sixty-two horses mentioned above, half a dozen belong to Mr. H. Chaplin, and half a dozen to his son, Mr. Eric Chaplin, but they are kept permanently at Trentham, for riding with the North Staffordshire Hounds, and are under the charge of Percival, like the rest of the stud.

The two old horses, Bellaport and the Celt, of which we give photographs in this volume, were ridden by the Duke for many seasons, and were especial favourites, Bellaport in particular. His career came to an end almost two years ago, and the Celt, whom we saw on our recent visit to the stables, will soon be entitled to either a pension or a bullet. They were both horses of a good short-legged stamp, and proved to be well suited for the North Stafford country. There is a good brown horse, Northampton, six years old, at the present moment one of his Grace's special favourites. The view we publish of the Hunt stables, and the adjoining Village Institute, gives a good idea of the situation, and of the appearance of the buildings, which are of the same picturesque style of architecture as most of the houses and villas at Trentham, which may be considered quite a model village. The Institute is the gift of the Duke and Duchess to the village, and is used as a reading-room and lecture-room, and for general purposes, and is much prized by the inhabitants generally.

Hitherto we have said very little with reference to the Mastership of the present Duke of Sutherland, and, in truth, there seems to be little need of many words, even if the present writer was the proper person to contribute them, for surely the best proof of the success of the Master is the unbroken record of good sport and good fellowship for the past twenty-eight years in the North Staffordshire Hunt, and the smooth and even tenor of its history during the same long period. One sometimes wonders how much the ordinary rank and file of those who hunt with any pack of foxhounds, and who see everything going, as it seems, so smoothly and easily day after day, know or think of the qualities required of the "man at the helm," or of the manifold cares and troubles of any one who is in the responsible position of M.F.H. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." The imaginary foxhunter we have pictured to ourselves may rest assured that the position of M.F.H. is anything but a bed of roses. Think of all the conflicting interests he has to contend with, the pheasant-preserving and non-hunting landowner, the occasional fox-killing gamekeeper, the numerous coverts that must not be drawn until they have been shot, the damage to fences and wheat, the poultry claims, sometimes quite imaginary, often greatly exaggerated, the terrible wire question, the enormous amount of correspondence arising out of all this; the continual cares of hound-breeding and hound-management; the supervision of the kennels, the hunt stables, the large stud of horses, and the little army of hunt servants and grooms. If you add to all this the onerous duties of a Master in the field, it is easy to see that the man has far from an easy berth of it who discharges the duties of such a position for upwards of a quarter of a century with general approval and success. The fierce light that beats upon a throne turns some of its lesser rays upon the rather less illustrious position of a master of foxhounds, and neither the Duke of Sutherland nor any other M.F.H. can hope to escape a certain amount of wholesome criticism, but the present writer, while disclaiming any intention to use the language of flattery, ventures to say with confidence, partly from his own personal knowledge, and partly from reliable reports from hunting friends, that the Duke's Mastership is by general consent considered to be a distinct success. There are many reasons why this should be so, and many points in his Grace's favour, some of which at least we may be allowed to enumerate here. First and foremost, the Master took up the duties from pure love of the sport when in the full vigour and energy of his early manhood. Then his position as heir to the ducal estate of Trentham, and residing in the very centre of the Hunt, with the kennels and stables close to his own door, surely must be credited as a great handicap in his favour. It would be unbecoming to say much about his Grace's personal qualities in this connection, but no one who knows anything of North Staffordshire requires to be told that the Duke's kindness and tact, and that indefinable quality which we call personal charm, are potent factors in the success of his Mastership. His popularity in the Hunt, both with landowners and farmers, and sportsmen of every degree, may be said to be unbounded, and no one who hunts with these hounds, or attends the frequent hospitalities at Trentham, will dissent from this opinion. A word ought to be said about the Master's exceptional consideration for the farmers of the district. No pains are spared to avoid all unnecessary damage to the crops and fences, and every effort is made to assist them by purchases of produce in the district. Of his tact and kindness as Master in the field, the writer can speak warmly from nearly twenty years' experience, and one could not wish for a more courteous or considerate chief. We have spoken elsewhere of the Duke's success in hound-breeding, and of the advantage of having such a skilful and experienced adviser as his brother-in-law, Mr. H. Chaplin, and such able managers in the kennel as Dickins and Boxall.

The Duke has for several years past hunted the lady pack himself on Mondays and Fridays, and is always zealous to show sport. We have endeavoured to steer clear both of criticism and flattery in writing of the Duke's Mastership, as we felt it incumbent upon us to do, but we should be sorry to conclude this short sketch without expressing as emphatically as we can, what we believe to be not only our own wish, but the wish of every member of the Hunt, that the Duke will for many years to come continue in his present position at the head of affairs, with the same acceptance and success which have attended his efforts for the last twenty-eight years. It is pleasant, too, to record that the rising generation of the house of Trentham are taking very kindly to fox-hunting, and seem likely to follow worthily the example set by both their parents.



LADY ROSEMARY LEVESON-GOWER AND THE MARQUIS OF STAFFORD.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

# CHAPTER XVIII.

SEASON OF 1899–1900—DODDINGTON AND MODDERSHALL—SEIGHFORD AND MADELEY—BIRD-IN-HAND AND WOORE—1900–1901—DODDINGTON AND BARLASTON GREEN—1901–1902—LONG FROST—CLOSE OF SEASON.

THE cub-hunting season of 1899–1900 started on the St. Leger Day, Wednesday, September 6th, Flying Fox's year. Boxall records in his diary as a remarkable circumstance that they did not find a fox, either on the first or last day of cub-hunting, and these were their only blank days of the season.

From Boxall's diary:

"*November* 6*th*, 1899. *Woore.*—Found a very nice lot of foxes in the Canridden. Had a nice gallop with one to Woore village. Hounds got divided in the field where we met. I went with one lot, and ran a good pace through Finson's Hay Gorse to Checkley Wood, and ran him to ground near Bridgemere. Got hounds together at Checkley. Found several foxes there, but did nothing; found in Finson's Hay Gorse. Ran to Checkley Wood, and beat us. When coming away a fox was viewed coming to the wood, but he was turned back and ran him to ground in a sand-hole near Woore. Drew the Mill Hay and Admiral's Gorse blank. Found in Harrow's Wood. Had a very nice gallop, and killed him near Doddington Hall. A glorious day. Not much scent in covert, but hounds could hold their own when fairly on the line of a fox and settled to him. It was a very enjoyable day for the opening of the season. Several falls; no one hurt. His Grace hunted the hounds.

"*November* 16*th*. *Ashley Village.*—Drew the Cow Leasows, and found a nice lot of foxes. Hounds bustled them about a little; one beat us at Mucklestone. Found in Willoughbridge. Had a nice little gallop, and beat us near Ashley Heath. Found in Green Lane Coppice, Bromley. Had a good hunt nearly to Standon Rough, back by Charnes to the Green Lane Coppice, through all the Bromley coverts to the Clayholders, up to Chorlton, back through the Clayholders. Here his Grace had to leave us, and I finished the run and killed in the Hicks Covert, Bromley. A nice run. One hour and five minutes. A very nice day. Found plenty of foxes. There was a very useful scent, and had a good day's sport.

"*November 20th. Doddington.*—Found in Chapel Woods. Hounds went away at a good pace by Walgherton Pool, Jerusalem, Lea Park, and Shaw's Rough, and beat us in Doddington Park. Found in Blakenhall Moss; beat us in Robin Hood's Wood. Found again in Shaw's Rough. Had a nice run with a twisting fox to Checkley Wood. Here no doubt changed foxes, but hounds kept going on to Blakenhall, and back to Checkley village, and beat us. We had a very good day's sport, but never were more than two miles from the meet, but were on the go all the time with bad-running foxes. Hounds worked hard, and deserved a fox. His Grace hunted them.

"*November 22nd. Moddershall.*—Drew the Oaks blank. Found in the Nurseries. Had a very good run through Stallington Heath, by Fulford to Bromley Wood, through Sherratt's Wood, on to Fradswell Heath, where hounds divided, I being alone with fourteen couples, and rattled one fox well about Birchwood Park. The other lot ran over to Sandon Gorse. Drew Black Lake. Found. Had a nice bit of work about Stallington. This ought to have been a record day, but, owing to horses being out of condition, could not do justice to the hunt. Had any of the whips been up at Fradswell Heath to help to keep hounds together we should have done better, but as it was it spoiled a good thing."

The Doddington and Moddershall days were thus recorded in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 25th, 1899 :

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

These hounds met at Doddington on Monday, and had a very good day with foxes that did not run very straight. Hounds, however, gave us plenty of galloping and jumping over a nice country from Blakenhall Moss, Shaw's Rough, and Checkley Wood, all on the Doddington estate. There was a large field out, who much enjoyed the day's sport. The meet on Wednesday was at Moddershall. This meet was at one time thought of as only an odd day out, but now is growing into favour owing to the good sport that has been enjoyed on this side of the country of late years. This satisfactory result is due to the support the Hunt receives from Sir Hill Child, of Stallington; Mr. J. Bourne and Mr. A. W. Leedam, of Hilderstone; Mr. W. Beech, of Painsley Hall; and Messrs. Hill, of the Spotacre Nurseries, who never wish to keep hounds out of their covers for shooting. At the same time, the Hunt is also indebted to the tenants and friends who reside in the district for their kindness in preserving good foxes and assisting in taking down wire so loyally. Although Moddershall Oaks did not hold a fox, one was found in Mr. Hill's Nursery, and he proved to be one of the right sort. After taking a turn round the Nurseries, he was bold enough to go through the carriages in the road into Stallington Heath, where he did not dwell a minute, but went away at the far end at a capital pace, leaving Fulford quarry and village on the right, and also the Bear Hole. He scurried on towards Hose Wood, Draycot, but leaving that on the left he bore a little to the right by Mr. Pointon's, of the New Buildings—a gentleman who is always glad to see hounds in full cry over his land—away through Bromley Wood, not waiting a second, on by Mr. Alcock's house to Wetley Brooks, thence through Sherratt's Wood to Fradswell Heath. To this point we had only had one check, but when we ran on to the Heath, hounds divided, the huntsman sticking to one lot and bustling a fox round Birchwood Park. The other lot ran a fox over to Sandon Gorse, where several more fresh foxes were soon on the move. Hounds were stopped, and the never-failing Black Lake Covers gave us some more good sport late in the day, when, owing to darkness coming on, we had to give it up.

X.

"*November 25th*, 1899. *Seighford.*—Found on the Moors; had a very good gallop for fifty-six minutes, and beat us at Stafford Castle. Very nice hunt. Found again on the Moors. Ran very fast for fifteen minutes, to ground in William's Wood; bolted him and killed. Drew the Cross-roads Covert blank. Found in Yeld's Rough. Had a very sharp gallop through Hollins Wood, Hilcote, and Badenhall, and stopped the hounds from going over the London and North-Western Railway, this spoiling another good run. A very nice day, perhaps a little too warm for bustling about, still we had a very enjoyable day. Had our fox run a little straighter in the morning we should have liked it better, and the fox from Yeld's Rough gave us a nice gallop in the evening."

The following short account of the same day's sport is extracted from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of December 2nd, 1899:

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

One of the best of many good days' sport was experienced with the North Staffordshire Hounds on Saturday, when the meet was at Seighford Hall, near Stafford, the residence of Colonel Dobson, who gave a breakfast to those attending the meet. A large field included Colonel and Mrs. Dobson, Mr. Donaldson Hudson, Mr. and Mrs. Davies Cooke, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughan-Williams, Mr. and Miss Challinor, Mr. and Mrs. Knight, Miss Moat, Mr. Birch, Mr. Fernie, Mr. Hollins, Mrs. Ridgway, Mr. Kirkham, and several gentlemen from the Albrighton neighbourhood. A fox was found in Moor Wood. He went away round by the Hall, straight past Stafford Castle, into Albrighton country, and was eventually lost. Another was ousted from the same cover, and for twenty minutes there was an exceedingly hot chase, hounds finally killing near the cover from which he broke away. The covers at the Hall were blank, but from Yeld's Rough there was a splendid forty minutes' run, and it was only on account of darkness that hounds were whipped off at Mill Meece.

On November 29th, meeting at Madeley village, the lady pack had a very fair day's sport, ending with a good fifty-six minutes from Shaw's Rough late in the afternoon. Boxall had a nasty fall near Wrinehill, from his horse putting his foot in a hole, and had to be sent home in a carriage, and was laid up and unable to hunt for ten days or more. After this hunting was stopped owing to frost until December 23rd.

"*December 26th*, 1899. *Doddington.*—Found and killed in Chapel Wood. Drew Lea Park blank. Found in Blakenhall Moss. Had a nice gallop to Checkley Wood, and ran to ground. Got on to a fox that had slipped away, and hunted him slowly to Finson's Hayes, but stopped the hounds from going into the gorse. Drew Shaw's Rough and Robin Hood's Wood blank. Found in Walgherton Wood. Had a very good run by Hatherton and Birchall nearly to Buerton, then back by Hankelow and beat us, but, owing to its freezing very sharp, did not persevere with him. Owing to the frost, we did not meet till 11.30. There was a good field out owing to the Cheshire Hounds being stopped by the death of the Duke of Westminster. His Grace the Duke of Sutherland also did not hunt. I hunted the bitches. A good day.

"*January 8th*, 1900. *Woore.*—Drew the Canridden blank. Found in the Mill Hay. Had a very good gallop to Checkley village, and back through the wood nearly to Onneley, back through Finson's Hay Gorse, and ran him to ground near Checkley; dug out and killed him. Drew Shaw's Rough and Chapel Wood blank. Found in the Three Brooks. Had a capital twenty minutes, and ran him to ground near Dorrington Old Hall. Drew Bellaport blank. The early part of the day was very fine, but came on very wet about four o'clock. Had a very good day's sport, one of the best Mondays up to this. Hounds could drive along.

"*January 20th. Sugnall.*—Found a brace in the osier-bed. Killed one after bustling him well about for twenty minutes; the other had slipped away, but did nothing with him. Found a brace in the Cullamores. Had a very nice hunt. Ran him to ground in Wincote Wood; a good fitfy minutes. Found a brace in Walton Gorse. Had a capital gallop by Ellenhall, Seighford, Chebsey, and back to Walton Hall, and beat us in the gardens. A very good day's sport, and a very fine day. Our run from Walton Gorse was good from end to end. Found a nice lot of foxes.

"*January 22nd. Doddington.*—Found in a new covert near the Hall. Had a very good run by Blakenhall over the London and North-Western Railway to Doddlespool, and beat us. Found in Weston Osier-bed. Ran him to ground in Mill Dale. Found in Blakenhall Moss. Ran sharp to Lea Park, and back to the Moss and beat us. Drew Shaw's Rough blank. Found in Finson's Hay Gorse. Had a good run of fifty-three minutes about the Wrinehill country, and killed him in the Drumble near Barr Hill. This was one of our best day's sport. Hounds could run all day. We only wanted straighter-going foxes. Paradise, a very useful little bitch, was left out, and got killed on the London and North-Western Railway near Madeley.

"*February 2nd. Cold Norton.*—Found at Shallowford Gorse. Had a very fast gallop, and killed near Mr. Ball's osier-bed. Found in Cold Norton. Hounds ran very fast to Darlaston, Tittensor Chase, through it and away to Swynnerton Hall, leaving the Pilsons on the right to Yarnfield, and back to Cold Norton, and beat us. Found in Wicklow Gorse. Hounds ran very fast to Darlaston Wood, back by the Fox Covert, and killed near Yarnfield. A good day. Sharp frost in the morning; made us an hour late at the meet. Although it was a very cold day, it was a good scenting one. Hounds ran very fast all day; had some capital sport."

After this hunting was stopped by frost for more than a fortnight, and after recording an average day's sport at Woore on February 19th—the first day after the frost—Boxall remarks—

"It was pleasant to get out again after a fortnight's frost. Although it was rather windy, it was a nice day and a fair scent. Hounds slipped along after the first fox. The fox from Finson's Hayes did not go very straight, although it was a nice hunt."

"*March 7th*, 1900. *Barlaston Village.*—Found in Newstead Wood. Had a very quick gallop for twenty-five minutes, and ran him to ground in Kibblestone Gorse. Found a brace on Downs Banks; hounds bustled one about the banks and killed him. Found in Moddershall Oaks. Had a nice gallop, and ran to ground in Stallington Park; dug out and killed. Found in Black Lake. Ran to ground in Stallington Hall gardens. Found in Leacroft. Had a good forty minutes, and beat us in the Nurseries. A fine day, but cold. Hounds ran fast in the open, but no scent in covert. We had a nice day's sport.

"*March 9th. Marston.*—Found in Hopton Gorse, but did nothing. Found in Cresswell Gorse. Had a very good seventeen minutes, and ran him to ground near the Black Plantation. Drew the plantation blank. Found at Shallowford. Ran nearly to Aston and killed. Drew Cold Norton blank. Found in Micklow Gorse. Had a very good run through Darlaston, back by Swynnerton Grange, the Pilsons, and stopped the hounds in Swynnerton Park. A fine day and a very enjoyable day's sport. The run from Cresswell Gorse was, I think, the fastest run we have had this season from find to finish. There was a good scent.

"*March 10th. Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Bromley Wood blank. Found in Hose Wood. Had a nice gallop, and ran to ground near Hilderstone. Drew Draycot Gorse, New Close Sprink, and Mr. Dobson's gorse blank. Found in Brindley's Wood. Had a nice run through Sherratt's Wood, Milwich Heath, by Witley Brooks, through Bromley Wood, and ran to ground in New Close Sprink. Found in the New Plantation. Ran fast through Birchwood Park, Sherratt's Wood, and stopped the hounds near Sherratt's house. A fine day, rather windy and cold, but we had a capital day's sport. Hard day for hounds.

"*March 12th. Woore.*—Drew Mill Hay, Admiral's Gorse, Harrow's Wood, and Three Brooks blank. Found in the Canridden. Had a nice gallop by Dorrington, over the racecourse (Woore), to the Mill Hay and Finson's Hay, and beat us. Bolted one out of the made earth near Admiral's Gorse. Had another nice little hunt, and beat us at Aston Cliffe. Drew Willoughbridge blank. Rather a cold day, but fine. Not a very good scent, owing to the dry weather."

The two days from the Bird-in-Hand and Woore are thus recorded in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of March 17th:

### THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

At the meet of the North Staffordshire Hounds at the Bird-in-Hand on Saturday, there was a good field and some grand sport. The Duke of Sutherland hunted the hounds. From Hose Wood a fox got away over Mr. Pointon's farm on to Sherratt's Wood, where he turned right-handed and pointed for Sandon. Another swerve to the right brought him nearly to Hilderstone village, where he went to ground after a very fast thirty minutes. Another at Brindley's Wood afforded a second fine run, for, getting away towards Sherratt's Wood, the fox rattled merrily along over the Draycot road and on to the Bird-in-Hand. Here he turned right-handed, and, running through a nice piece of country, went to ground at New Close Sprink, the run lasting full fifty minutes. A third was discovered near Brindley's Gorse, but after a short chase hounds were stopped, as the day was far advanced. Hunting from the village of Woore, the North

Stafford Hounds had a good day's sport on Monday. The field was an exceptionally large one, and included the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, Major Stamer, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Knight, Mr. Donaldson Hudson, Mr. Rawson, Mr. Coghill, Colonel Dobson, etc. Mills Hay Covert, Admiral's Gorse, Harrow's Wood, and Three Brooks were all blank, but on going to Canridden a fox was disturbed, which got away across College Fields to Bellaport, where he turned to the left, crossed the racecourse at Syllenhurst Farm, and was eventually lost, after a fine gallop of thirty minutes. Below Admiral's Gorse another one was got away from an artificial earth. Going through Harrow's Wood, Mills Hay Wood, and across Syllenhurst Farm, he raced over Greaves's Farm right up to Onneley village, and thence through Aston Plantation up almost to the Maer Hills. Here he was, however, lost, as there was little scent on the ploughed land. This was another good run of forty minutes.

"*March 30th*, 1900. *First Milestone, Market Drayton Road.*—Found in Tunstall Rough. Had a very good gallop by Betton, the Brand, Norton-in-Hales, Napeley, and Mucklestone to Oakley Folly, through it to the farm, near where the fox got into an outhouse, but was let out, and hounds killed him in Burnt Woods. Found in Peatswood. Had a slow hunt to the Spoil Banks, and beat us. A very fine day. Hounds ran very fast from Tunstall Rough. After crossing the railway, the hounds ran clean away from every one, and were not caught until they got to Oakley Folly. This was one of the best runs of the season.

*April 2nd*, 1900. *Madeley.*—Drew Beeches Wood blank. Found in Wrinehills (*three*). Had a good deal of bustling about the woods; then had a nice gallop by the Bitterns to Maer Hills, and beat us. Found in Checkley Wood. Had a nice hunt by Finson's Hay Gorse, nearly to Woore, back to Wrinehills and Checkley, where hounds were stopped. One fox went to ground in Wrinehills. Owing to the Cheshire packs being stopped, we had a large field out, and gave them a good day's sport. Parker, the first whip, had a fall near Finson's Hay, and broke the fibula bone of his leg.

"*April 7th*, 1900. *Seighford Hall.*—Drew the Moors blank. Found in the Old Ford Wood. Ran sharp to William's Wood, over the brook into the Albrighton country, and ran him to ground near Gnosall. Five-miles point. Came back to Seighford and drew most of the coverts blank, also Cresswell Gorse. Found in Hopton Gorse. Had a very good gallop by Marston Wood and Enson Moor, where the fox swam over the Trent, ran up the meadows nearly to Oston, where he recrossed the Trent, and nearly to Yarlet Hall, where hounds ran up to him and killed. This was a good run throughout, and made a good finish for the season. A very fine morning, also sunny and warm, but we had a capital day's sport for the last day of the season. We finished off well by killing the last fox, after a good run over a nice country."

The season which ended thus auspiciously had on the whole a good record. Seventy-nine foxes were killed, and sixty-seven run to ground, one hundred and three days' hunting altogether. Subscriptions for 1899–1900 amounted to £2372. The Poultry and Covert Fund absorbed £346, and upwards of £500 were spent in removing wire, and in laying about nine and a half miles of fences on

LORD ALISTAIR ST. CLAIR LEVESON-GOWER.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

forty-three farms, but considerably more than half of this was done at the expense of the Duke of Sutherland.

This was G. Norman's last season as stud-groom, after more than thirty years' faithful and efficient service. He had always turned out his horses in admirable style and condition, and had given great satisfaction, not only to the present Master, but to his predecessors, the late Lord Shrewsbury, and Colonel Nugent. Norman is still in excellent preservation, we are glad to know, and is enjoying a pension and a home liberally provided for him at Trentham by the Duke of Sutherland. G. Percival has succeeded Norman as stud-groom, and fully maintains the good reputation which his predecessor had won.

The season 1900–1901 was rather below than above the good North Stafford average. Although there was not very long interruption through frost, hunting was stopped for a fortnight in January and February owing to the death of Queen Victoria, and after this there was another stoppage owing to frost and snow. Boxall notes in his diary that it was the wettest and roughest season he has had since he joined the North Stafford Kennels, in 1877.

We ought, perhaps, to have mentioned before that in the year 1899 Major Stamer was appointed joint secretary with Mr. A. Simpson to the Hunt Committee, on the resignation of Mr. R. N. Wood of the joint secretaryship, and in the year 1900 Major Stamer was also, on the nomination of the Duke of Sutherland, appointed to act as joint Master with his Grace; Mr. W. W. Dobson being appointed to act as Field Master in the absence of the Duke and Major Stamer.

It is only right and proper to acknowledge here the signal services rendered to the Hunt by these gentlemen. More especially we may mention the very efficient service done for so many years by Mr. Wood and Mr. Simpson as joint honorary secretaries to the Hunt. Mr. Wood still continues to give his valuable services as honorary secretary to the Covert Fund, which office he has held without intermission for something like thirty-four years.

At the present moment Major Stamer and Mr. Simpson most efficiently perform the secretarial duties, the latter gentleman especially giving an immense amount of care and attention to the duties, which are admirably carried out. We cannot speak from personal knowledge of the new Field Mastership arrangements, having for some years ceased to hunt, but we have not the slightest doubt that these arrangements are highly satisfactory to the members of the Hunt, for both gentlemen selected for command are amongst the very best sportsmen of the Hunt, and may be trusted to preserve the good traditions of North Stafford Mastership in the field.

The hounds met at Woore as usual to open the season of 1900–1901, on Monday, November 5th, and the day's sport, which was not at all remarkable, is thus recorded in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of November 10th:

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

The opening meet of the North Staffordshire Hounds took place on Monday at Woore. At the time appointed, however, the heavy fog had lifted but very little, and it was not until an hour later that the Master (the Duke of Sutherland) decided to make a start. Three Brooks was the first cover tried, and from there the initial run was obtained, the fox bolting merrily away into Harrow's Wood, and then, leaving Canridden on the left, on over College Fields, beyond Bellaport, close to Norton-in-Hales, where he was lost. Little more was done. Among those present, in addition to the Master, were Major Stamer (Betton House), Mr. Simpson, Miss Chetwode (Oakley), Mrs. Eliot, Miss Twyford (Whitmore), Mrs. Knight, Mrs. Ridgway (Barlaston), Mrs. Palmer (Madeley), Mrs. Hornby, Mr. A. H. Hornby (Nantwich), Mrs. Wickstead (Betley Hall), Major Kearsley (Stapeley), Mr. Kearsley, Miss Kearsley, Mr. C. W. Clifford (Red House, Market Drayton), Colonel Dobson (Seighford), Mr. P. H. Rawson (The Brand), Baron von Trutzschler, Mr. Arthur Knowles (Alveston Hall), Mr. Arthur Brocklehurst, Mr. W. R. Kirkham (Stone), Mr. Mould (Trentham), Mr. Hall (Kynsal Lodge), Mr. Hall, junior, Mr. Mather (Betley), Mr. R. Cooke (Riverside), Mr. Piggot (Nantwich), Dr. Corbet Stain (Audlem), Dr. Loney (Audlem), Mr. T. Cartlich (the Manor House, Woore), Mr. W. Blockley (Moor Hall), Mr. A. Blockley (Radwood), Mr. Frank Bourne, Mr. W. Barnett (Norton Wood), Mr. F. Cooke (Bearstone), Mr. Fernandez, and Mr. W. Wolley (Market Drayton).

On Monday, November 26th, the meet was at Madeley village, and the day is also recorded as follows in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of December 1st:—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

The North Staffordshire Hounds met on Monday at Madeley. The Master (the Duke of Sutherland) carried the horn, and those present included the recently appointed joint Master, Major Stamer, together with the Right Hon. Henry Chaplin, Lord Shrewsbury, Sir Delves Broughton, Miss Twyford, Miss Chetwode, Mr. Reginald Corbet, junior, Mr. Arthur Brocklehurst, Major and Miss Kearsley, Colonel and Mrs. Dobson, Mr. Harrison, Miss Harrison, Mr. Coghill, Mr. and Mrs. Donaldson Hudson, Baron von Trutzschler, and many others. Numerous foxes were discovered in Wrinehill Woods, and in quick succession a couple were pushed out, only to return after ringing round for a few minutes. From Checkley Wood a run of nearly an hour's duration was experienced, although the going was perhaps hardly so fast as might have been anticipated. Coming out towards Wrinehill Woods, the fox bolted through cover, swerved right back to Checkley, and out again, leaving Finson's Hay slightly on the left, and thence almost on to Woore, from where he doubled quickly back past Onneley, and was eventually lost.

From Boxall's diary :

"*December 7th*, 1900. *Marston.*—Found in Hopton Gorse. Had one of the best gallops of the season. Ran a very wide ring by Enson, Yarlet, New Buildings, Bird's of Hopton, back by Hopton Gorse, Salt Heath, Yarlet Wood, and beat us at Marston. Found in Shallowford Gorse. Had a sharp twenty minutes. Ran him to ground at Pirehill. Was halloaed on to another fox; doubtful, but did not do much. A very good day's sport. The first run was very good, but was marred a little owing to wire.

"*December 8th*, 1900. *Maer Hall.*—Found on the hills. Bustled him about a little, and lost him near Camp Hill. Drew the Fern Banks blank. Found in the Bitterns. Ran him to ground at Barr Hill. Dug him out, and turned him down in the Bitterns. He went away again towards Barr Hill, but got headed back. The hounds met and killed him. Found in Radwood. Ran sharp to Aston Cliff, back to Radwood, and beat us. Found again on Maer Hills, but did nothing. Drew Blackbrook Bogs blank. Rather hot, choking day. Not much scent, only when hounds ran up wind."

This Maer day is also chronicled in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of December 15th, as follows, coupled with a day from Doddington, on Monday, December 10th :—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

On Saturday the rendezvous was Maer. The joint Master, Major Stamer, had charge of the field, and amongst the followers were Lord Henry Grosvenor, Mr. and the Misses Harrison (Maer), Mr. Fenwick Harrison, M.F.H., Mr. and Mrs. Vaughan Williams (Eccleshall), Mrs. Guy Knight, Mr. R. C. Donaldson-Hudson (Cheswardine), Mrs. Davies Cook, Miss Twyford (Whitmore), Mrs. Wicksted (Betley Hall), Mr. W. Stamer, Mr. Mather (Betley), Mr. John Knight, Mr. T. Cartlich (Manor House, Woore), Mr. R. A. Chichester (Cheswardine), Mr. Norris (Eccleshall), Mr. Birch (Stone), Mr. Hines, Baron von Trutzschler, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Young (Keele), Mr. and Mrs. W. Blockley (Moor Hall), Mr. W.

Wolley (Market Drayton), Mr. Alfred Blockley (Radwood), Mr. Sandbach (Radwood), and Messrs. Wilkinson (Swinchurch). A fox was pushed out from Maer Hills and away to Radford, but was lost hard by Mr. Sandbach's farm. One or two of the smaller covers were then worked, and on arriving at the Bitterns another fox was got away. He also succeeded in defeating hounds, going to ground near Bar Hill, after a few minutes' running; but was afterwards ousted from his concealment and returned to the Bitterns, from where, a little later, hounds accounted for him, he unfortunately being headed when there was every prospect of a good gallop. Another was put up, but lost. Scent was keen during the earlier part of the day, but gave out considerably later.

Hunting from Doddington Park, near Nantwich, with the North Staffords on Monday, were the Master (the Duke of Sutherland), Miss Chaplin, Mr. Eric Chaplin, Lord Ingestre, Sir Delves Broughton, Lady Boughey, Major Stamer, Mrs. Wicksted, Miss Twyford, Major and the Misses Kearsley, Mr. Arthur Brocklehurst, Mr. Arthur Knowles, and other visitors from the Cheshire country. The Doddington covers, Blakenhall, and Shaw's Rough, were drawn blank, and it was not until afternoon that hounds, having an abundance of choice at Checkley, ran out for Woore. Touching Finson's Hay, they ran straight to Mill Hay, where hounds unfortunately divided, the body of the pack marking the hunted fox to ground in a drain, and two couples going on for Three Brooks from Finson's Hay. Subsequently hounds ran almost to Woore before turning left-handed for Bellaport, the line being continued thence right into Wrinehill, where the fugitive was marked to ground in a rabbit-burrow. Hounds then found a fox, which ran through Wrinehill for Crewe. The pack were apparently hunting a bold fox, but, being unfortunately headed, he ranged back to Wrinehill.

"*December* 12*th*, 1900. *Stoke-by-Stone.*—Found in the Lodge Plantation. Beat us in Cotwalton Drumble. Found in Hardiwick Heath. Hounds did a lot of work in and out of covert. Beat us in the heath. Drew Orange Hayes, Spot Nurseries, and Stallington Heath blank. Found in Black Lake. Had a very good forty-five minutes by the Grange, Lea Croft, Saverley Green, nearly to Painsley, bearing to the right through Hose Wood and Draycot Gorse, and stopped the hounds going into Sherratt's Wood. Quite dark. We did not do much in the early part of the day. The weather was very hot and choking, but late in the afternoon hounds ran fast from Black Lake to Sherratt's Wood. Owing to darkness, I had to stop them.

"*December* 19*th*, 1900. *Barlaston Green.*—Found on the Downs Banks. Had a sharp fifteen minutes, and ran to ground at the Outlanes. Found in Kibblestone Gorse. Had another fast little gallop, and ran him to ground on Downs Banks. Drew Moddershall Oaks blank. Found in Black Lake. Had a good hunting run for about an hour, and rolled him over in Stallington Park. Drew Cocknage Wood blank. Found in Newpark Wood. Had a fast gallop for ten minutes, and ran to ground near Newstead Farm. A very nice day. There was a large field out. Had a very good day's sport."

This Barlaston day was also chronicled in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of December 22nd, as follows:—

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

These hounds met at Barlaston Green on Wednesday, when a fine gallop of over an hour's duration was chronicled. The joint Master, Major Stamer, was in charge, while hounds were hunted by Boxall. A large field included Mr. A. Heath, M.P., Colonel and Mrs. Dobson, Mr. Vaughan-Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Ridgway, Miss Hill Child, Miss Paddock, Mr. and Mrs. John Knight, Miss Knight, Miss Bourne, Miss Hart, Messrs. Wedgwood, Birch, Thompson, Mold (Trentham), Fernie, Bennion, Forster, Phillips, Mather, Hawley, Scarisbrick, Kirkham, Hilton, Grover, Hines, Copeland, and Hughes. From Downs Banks a fox was immediately pushed out, but was marked to ground after a short spin; while a second customer from the gorse at Kibblestone gave another short burst. On going to Black Lake, a fox got well away on the Fulford side, crossed the road, and ran up to Stallington Heath, through the cover, on up to the Nurseries, and thence to the Windmill. Here he appeared to be taking his line for Cocknage, but, leading the way over Rough Close Common, came on to Moddershall, back through the cover from which he originally emerged, and was killed hard by Stallington Hall, following a clinking run without a check and over a nice bit of country. Scent improved considerably, and was much keener than it has been of late.

"*December* 26*th*, 1900. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Sherratt's Wood and Brindley's Wood blank. Found in Bromley Wood. Had a good run through Hose Wood to Saverley Green Cross Gate, Stallington Heath, Black Lake, and beat us at Stallington Grange. Drew the Gorse and Leacroft blank. Went back to Draycot Woods. Found a ringing fox in Draycot Gorse. After bustling him from one wood to another, ran him to ground in Bromley Wood. A beautiful day for the time of year. There was a large field out of every description, and we had a fair day's sport. The gallop from Bromley Wood was very enjoyable.

"*December* 31*st*, 1900. *Madeley Road Station.*—Found and killed at Radwood. Found again in the Bitterns. Had a nice hunt to Beeches Wood and back by Radwood, and beat us at Aston Cliffe. Found in Wrinchills. Had another good hunting run by Finson's Hay, Admiral's Gorse, College Fields, Buerton Gorse, Adderley Gorse, and ran him to ground in Cox Bank, Adderley. A nice hunting day, and one of the best, if not the best, of the season up to now. There was a nice holding scent; hounds could go on hunting their fox without any trouble. The run from Wrinehill to Adderley was good all through, and made a good finish for the old year.

"January 14*th*, 1901. *Wybunbury.*—Found on the Moss (three). Had a nice run by Blakenhall Moss to Checkley Wood and Mill Green, and ran him to ground on the Brook side near the New Chapel, Bridgemere. Drew Doddington blank. Found in the osier-bed at the Cliffe, and had another good hunt by Blakenhall to Shaw's Rough, Robin Hood's Wood, Lea Park, Chapel Wood, Broomlands; from there by Pewit Hall to Admiral's Gorse, through it by Will Green, and stopped the hounds on Mr. Noden's farm, Bridgemere, at five o'clock. The first run was one hour and forty minutes; the second run was two hours. This was the first time we could draw the coverts at Wybunbury for over thirty years, owing to the owner being against hunting. We had a real good day's sport. On our way home by the Mill Hay Wood, Woore, hounds broke away on the line of a fox in the dark. Ran by Finson's Hay, and stopped them at Bridgemere. His Grace hunted the hounds.

"*January* 21*st*, 1901. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew the Glades and Golling's Rough blank. Found a mangy fox in Adderley Gorse. Bustled him about nicely, and ran him over to Cox Bank and killed. Found again in Adderley Gorse. Ran nicely to Golling's Rough, back by the Gorse to Buerton Gorse, where we soon had several foxes on foot, but hounds stuck to a line of another fox and killed him. We got on to another fox in the covert, and hunted him nicely about

College Fields, and beat us. Drew the Drumble blank, also part of Bellaport. Found in Dorrington Wood. Had a very nice gallop down to the North Staffordshire Railway, back to the Canridden. Another brace of foxes before the hounds. They soon divided. Got most of them away, and ran into Harrow's Wood, where more fresh foxes were soon on the move. After taking a turn round in the covert, they ran nicely through the Mill Hay to Finson's Hay Gorse, and stopped hounds going away towards Checkley Wood. His Grace hunted them."

After January 21st, 1901, the hounds were kept in the kennels for a fortnight, in consequence of the Queen's death, and then frost and snow stopped hunting for another week. Hounds were not out again until Saturday, February 9th, and that was in the snow for exercise, in Swynnerton old Park.

"*February* 11*th*, 1901. *Wybunbury.*—Found on the Moss. After taking a turn round and being headed at every point, he got away unseen, and four couple of hounds, although his Grace got the remainder on the line of the others after they had been gone some time; could not do much. Went back and drew the other coverts blank, also the Cliffe coverts. Found in Blakenhall Moss. Had a nice hunt to Checkley Wood and Finson's Hay. Beat us near the Greaves Farm. Found at Finson's Hay. Beat us near Harrow's Wood. Found again in Finson's Hay. Beat us near Three Brooks. Found in the Canridden. Had a very fast and good gallop through Mill Hay, to Finson's Hay Drumble, to Checkley, leaving the woods on the left; went to Wrinehills, and stopped hounds near the London and North-Western line, Bower end of Wrinehills. This was the first nice hunting day since our gracious Queen died. Although there was not a good scent in the early part of the day, it was a nice holding scent; hounds could run nicely. The fox from Wybunbury slipped away, also four couples of hounds, unseen. The gallop from the Canridden late in the day was very good.

"*February* 27*th*, 1901. *Sherratt's Wood.*—Drew Brindley's Wood blank. Found in Birchwood Park. Had a nice gallop, and beat us near Chartley Park. Found again in Birchwood Park. Beat us in Chartley Gorse. Found in Sherratt's Wood. Had a good gallop through Fradswell Heath to Whiteley Brook, Garshall Green, the Rookery Wood, Hilderstone; then along the valley nearly to Milwich, and ran him to ground at Day Hills. A nice day and a very good day's sport. Found plenty of foxes. The run from Sherratt's Wood was a good one, and over a rough country; the going very heavy.

"*March 4th. Woore.*—Drew the Canridden and College Fields blank. Found three foxes in Buerton Gorse. Had a very nice gallop by Hankin's Hay to Harrow's Wood, and stopped the hounds owing to them getting divided near College Fields. Drew Buerton Gorse a second time, but did not find. Found in Bellaport. Had a capital gallop by Bearston Mill to Willoughbridge, Cow Leasows, back to Willoughbridge; then by Park House to Maer Hills, Berth Hill, Hatton Gorse to Chorlton, and beat us at Mr. Turner's, the Roe Farm. A very good run. This was a good day's sport. The run from Bellaport was very fast up to Maer, and an unusual line. Our first horses were done up when we changed.

"*March 25th. Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew all the Betton coverts, Golling's Rough, and Adderley Gorse blank. Found in Buerton Gorse. Had a very nice gallop to Three Brooks, back by College Fields, Bellaport to Buerton Gorse; then away to Bellaport, and beat us. Found in Bellaport Woods. Did nothing much. Found in the Bogs at Willoughbridge. Had a very good hunting run of two hours through the Forty Acres, Ashley Heath, Burnt Woods, Bishop's Woods to Fair Oak; back through Broughton Birches, Burnt Woods, Ashley Heath, Forty Acres, Cow Leasows, Winnington to Willoughbridge, Birch House Wood to Lordsley Gorse. Gave him up. Seven o'clock; getting dark. Very cold day. Rather a deep snow for the time of year, but had a very good day's sport. The run from Willoughbridge was a good sporting run. This fox has given us several good runs this season. I hope he will have a good summer and be all right for next season.

"*April 4th*, 1901. *Fair Oaks.*—Found and ran to ground in Bishop's Woods. Found and killed at Sugnall. Found in Wincote Wood. Had a nice gallop by Johnson Hall to Ellenhall, through Walton Gorse, by Chebsey, through Yeld's Rough, Holland Wood, back to Chebsey, and beat us in the village. A fox was seen to go from Walton Gorse after we ran through. Went to try to find him, but failed. Had a very nice day's sport to finish the season with. The run from Wincote Wood to Chebsey was a very enjoyable one. As regards the weather, we had slight snowstorms, with very strong winds. It was not like the end of the season, which has been the wettest and roughest I remember, but we have done very well in the way of sport. This finishes my twenty-fourth season with the North Stafford Hounds."

Record for the season: forty-nine foxes killed, fifty-eight run to ground; ninety-four days' hunting altogether.

Subscriptions amounted to £2233. About £150 were devoted to wire removal, and £440 to the Poultry and Covert Fund, besides about £258 spent by the Duke of Sutherland in laying down five and a half miles of fencing on twenty-eight farms, and in cutting and fencing gorse coverts. Also, out of a special fund, £221 were spent upon the Draycot coverts.

The season of 1901–1902 was a good deal interrupted by frost and snow, and now and then by thick fogs, and for thirty days hunting was lost altogether through bad weather, but on the whole sport was rather above the average, and a fair number of foxes were accounted for. The season opened, as usual, with a meet at Woore, on Monday, November 4th. Boxall says in his diary, "Owing to a very thick fog we could not hunt much. Came home early. Very disappointing for the first day;" and much the same state of things occurred on Wednesday, the 6th, at Draycot Woods (Bird-in-Hand), where, "owing to fog," says Boxall, "we met a little late and had to give over early." From Boxall's diary we extract the following :—

"*Monday, November* 11*th*, 1901. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew the Osier-bed, Betton Moss, Brownhills, Long Plantation, the Glades, Buerton Gorse, College Field Drumble, and Kynsall Lodge all blank. A fox was viewed going away from Mr. Kellock's Gorse, Highfields. Had a very good run by Norton Wood Farm, back by Adderley Gorse, Kynsall Heath, Buerton Gorse, College Field Drumble, leaving Three Brooks on the right, through Admiral's Gorse, over the Doddington road, and stopped the hounds near Finson's Hay Gorse. His Grace hunted them. A very wet day. The first real wet day we have had since we began cub-hunting. We were very unlucky in not finding in the morning, but we had a very good run with the fox from Highfields. Hounds ran fast, and slipped the field near Adderley. The only persons with them were the Duke, Major Harding, a stranger, myself, and Furnival, who was acting as second whip for the day.

"*Saturday, November 30th. Betley.*—Found in the Old Hall Wood. Had a very nice gallop by Barthomley Hall, Knowl Bank, nearly to Checkley; then turned to the right and ran by Hayes Wood to the Gladdings, through it to Heighley Castle and to Madeley Manor Woods, and stopped the hounds owing to the shooting. Drew Bowsey Wood, Wrench's Drumble blank; also Betley Gorse. Found a brace in Chorlton Osiers. Had a very good run by Doddlespool, through Mill Dale, by Berthomley village, nearly to Alsager, and ran to ground at Inglesea Brook. A good hour's gallop, and a nice day's sport.

"*Monday, December 2nd. Madeley.*—Found in Wrinehills. Had a nice gallop by Checkley and ran him to ground near Betley Road Station. Drew Checkley Wood blank. Found in Finson's Hay Gorse. Had a good run to Wrinehills, Barr Hill, Onneley village, and killed between Woore and Gravenhunger. This was a very good hunt of one hour. Came home early—2.45. His grace hunted them. A very nice day, and a good day's sport. There was a good holding scent. Hounds could hunt it through cattle, etc., and stick to the line of their fox.

"*Wednesday, December 4th. Sandon.*—Found in Gayton Gorse. Had a sharp twenty-five minutes, and ran to ground in the Black Hill Covert. Found again in Gayton Gorse. Had another fast gallop by Coton, Fradswell, to Chartley Gorse, then bearing to the right, and ran him to ground in the Meynell country. Found in Birchwood Park. Had another good hunt by Sherratt's Wood and Middleton Green nearly to Field; then to Chartley Gorse, through it, by Fradswell Hall nearly to Gayton Gorse, where the fox was headed; turned back by Coton, and ran to ground near Fradswell Hall. A good day. This was a very nice day's sport; I think the best we have had from Sandon, owing to the foxes going over a better line of country instead of going, as usual, to Hardiwick Heath. A very hard day for hounds."

Mr. Vaughan-Williams says of this day that he considers it the most sporting day he has had with the North Stafford since he came into the country, adding, "We had three runs of a high order, varying from twenty-five to fifty minutes, accounted for all our foxes, and went home at two o'clock."

" *Wednesday, December* 11*th*, 1901. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Bromley Wood, Draycot Gorse, and New Close Sprink blank. Found and killed in Hose Wood. Drew Sherratt's Wood blank. Found in Fradswell Heath. Ran sharp through Birchwood Park, Brindley's Plantation, to Mr. Philips's Gorse, through it, and ran to ground at Middleton Green. Found again in Fradswell Heath. Had a very fast twenty-five minutes through Birchwood Park, Chartley Gorse, back by Fradswell village, leaving it on the right nearly to Gayton Gorse, and rolled him over near Coton. In two inches of snow we began drawing the Draycot Woods, but the snow melted fast, and we had a good day's sport. The last run from Fradswell Heath was very fast from find to finish. Only had one slight check, and ran from scent to view, and rolled him over on the hillside near Coton. This was a good gallop."

From December 14th to the 30th hunting was stopped altogether owing to frost and snow.

" *Wednesday, January* 8*th*, 1902. *Bird-in-Hand.*—Drew Hose Wood blank. Found in Mr. Dobson's new gorse. Hounds ran fast by Painsley, back into Hose Wood and New Close Sprink, where we had three foxes on foot. Hounds got divided. My lot—fourteen couples—ran sharp through Bromley Wood, out on the Hilderstone side; then to Sherratt's Wood and to Draycot Gorse, where we got on a stale line, and gave him up. The other seven couples ran to Brindley's Wood, and spoilt our afternoon's draw. We drew the coverts blank; also Mr. Philips's Gorse. Found in Stallington Heath. Hounds ran very fast over to Black Lake, through it, by Stallington Hall, Fulford, Leacroft, and ran him to ground near Stallington Hall. We no doubt should have had a clinking day's sport had the hounds kept together at New Close Sprink. One lot spoilt the afternoon draw. The gallop from Stallington Heath was very fast from find to finish. He was only just in front of the hounds when he got to ground.

" *Wednesday, January* 22*nd. Walton Hall.*—Found a brace in the gorse. Ran one sharp by Chebsey Rough, Yeld's Rough, and ran him to ground on the river-bank near Bridgeford. Went back to Walton Gorse. Found again, but would not leave, so left him. Found a brace in Yeld's Rough. Hunted him to Chebsey, nearly to Hilcote, back through Holland's Wood and Yeld's Rough, then over the river to Walton Bank, Radford Pits, nearly to Seighford; but was headed back to Heath Wood, Five Lane Ends, Ranton Woods, Knightley, Wincote Wood, Johnson Hall, Acton Hill, down to the river at Hilcote, where he again was headed, turned to Walton Hall Drumble, then made his point over the river, and beat us at Hilcote Wood. A good hunt. A very nice day with a useful scent. The run from Yeld's Rough was a very good one. We went over a lot of country, and hounds well deserved their fox. If he had not been headed at Hilcote, which caused rather a long check, I think they would have hunted him down."

Between Friday, January 24th, and Monday, February 24th, there was no hunting owing to frost and snow, and for the whole of the month of February there were only three days on which it was possible to hunt. A very exceptional record.

"*Saturday*, *March 8th*, 1902. *Standon.*—Drew the osier-bed, Mr. Garde's covert, Brocton Wood, Sugnall, and Charnes blank. Found in the Green Lane Coppice. A heavy vixen. Stopped the hounds. Found in the Hicks Coppice. Had a very good gallop by Podmore, Bromley Hall, Broughton, through Bishop's Wood into Burnt Woods, where no doubt he got to ground. Found three foxes on Ashley Heath. Had a very fast gallop through the Forty Acres by Willoughbridge, Cow Leasows, Ashley Heath, and stopped the hounds going into Burnt Wood. A good day. A good scent, and if we had found early in the morning, no doubt we should have had a clinking day. Hounds ran fast from Bromley, also from Ashley in the afternoon.

"*Monday*, *March* 10*th*. *Madeley.*—Found in Wrinehills. After ringing about the wood a little, he went away at a good pace, through Beeches Wood, by Barr Hill, the Bitterns, Radwood, Aston Cliff, to the Willoughbridge. Stopped hounds going towards the Cow Leasows. Found in Finson's Hay Gorse. Had another capital gallop by Bridgemere, Shaw Rough, nearly to Betley Road Station; then turned to Wrinehill Woods, where hounds got divided. Got them together again, and drew the Bitterns blank. This was a very good day's sport. Hounds ran very fast all day. One of the best scenting days of the season.

"*Saturday*, *March* 15*th*. *The Gladdings.*—Found a nice show of foxes in the Gladdings. Owing to the wind could not do much. Found in Craddock's Moss. Had a hunt over the Coal Pits to Walton Wood, and beat us. Found in Mill Dale. Had a very good run by the Dunvilles, through Foxley Drumble and Gorse, by Alsager Wood, through Linley Wood, by the Hall, and killed at Butt Lane in a pig-sty. This was fast from find to finish. A very windy day. Found plenty of foxes, and hounds had a hard day. The run from Mill Dale was good all the way. When we killed our fox at Butt Lane, which is in a thickly populated district, and owing to a football match near to, we had over a hundred people to see the hounds break up the fox.

"*Monday*, *March* 17*th*. *Norton-in-Hales.*—Drew Betton Moss and the Glades blank. Found in Golling's Rough. Had a very good run by Hankin's Hay, College Field Drumble, Pewit Hall, Buerton village, by Three Brooks, and ran to ground near Buerton. Dug the fox out dead. Found in College Field Drumble. Had another good run by Three Brooks, Mill Hay, Woore Hall, over the Racecourse to Gravenhunger, over the North Staffordshire Railway, near Pipe Gate Station, on to Aston Cliffe, and ran to ground at Sidway. A very good run. A very nice day, and one of the best days this season. The first run was a very nice hunting run, with a useful holding scent. The last gallop hounds never checked only slightly from find to finish. A real good day's sport.

"*Monday*, *March* 24*th*. *Wybunbury.*—Found on the Moss. Had a very nice hunt in a storm, by Blakenhall, over the London and North-Western Railway line at the Den Farm, recrossed at Betley Road Station, on to Lea Park, to ground. Drew Chapel Wood blank. Found in Admiral's Gorse. Did nothing much owing to rain and sleet. Found in Harrow's Wood. Had a slow hunt, and ran him to ground near Buerton. A very stormy day and cold. Had rain, snow, and sleet all day, and a rough ride home, facing us all the way—thirteen miles. Very few stayed to the finish. Our first fox gave us a nice gallop."

The *Manchester Courier* of March 25th contains the following account of the same day's sport:—

## CAPITAL RUN WITH THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

To the accompaniment of hail, rain, and sleet, the North Staffordshire Hounds yesterday provided their followers with a grand run extending over an hour and twenty minutes. The meet was at Wybunbury, not far distant from Nantwich, when, in spite of the cold, boisterous March morning, the Master, the Duke of Sutherland, opened the proceedings in the presence of a large and fashionable field, including the joint Master, Major Stamer, the Duchess of Sutherland, Mr. Eric Chaplin, Sir Delves Broughton, Sir Thomas and Lady Boughey, Colonel Dobson, Mr. Arthur Knowles, Mr. Reggie Corbet, Master of the South Cheshire Hounds, Mr. Hornby, and many others representing the Shropshire and Cheshire packs. Finding almost immediately hounds had been cast into Wybunbury Moss, the fox bolted straight away for Shavington, and, after getting close here, raced on as far as Betley Road Station. He then crossed the London and North-Western Railway, doubled back again and recrossed the line, marking his course out by Blakenhall village and Blakenhall Moss to Lea Park. Continuing the chase, the line was carried, as merrily as the unpropitious climatic conditions would permit, on past Robin's Nest into Doddington Park, where, following some zigzag movements, the fugitive succeeded in reaching Lea Park, and was run to ground there. The gallop was undoubtedly the best experienced for a considerable time past, and it was rather unusual that during practically the whole of the gallop Reynard set his head to the wind. Chapel Wood was afterwards worked to no purpose, and although further sport resulted later in the day, the first was by far the best run.

"*Monday, March* 31*st*, 1902. *Madeley Road.*—Drew the Bitterns blank. Found in Wrinehill Wood. Had a nice little gallop over Barr Hill. Stopped the hounds near Madeley road. Drew Finson's Hay Gorse, Admiral's Gorse, Harrow's Wood, Three Brooks, Buerton Gorse, Golling's Rough, Bellaport, Dorrington, Canridden, Mill Hay, all blank. Found in Checkley Wood at 6.30 p.m. Had a nice little gallop towards Bridgemere, and beat us. No doubt he went to ground in the Brook side near the blacksmith's shop. A nice morning. Were all photographed at the meet for Mr. Blagg's book. Found a good fox in Wrinehill Wood, but did not go on with him, owing to him going towards Maer Hills. Then we had a long draw before finding again, which spoilt the day.

"*Friday, April* 4*th. Meece House.*—Found in Meece Gorse, and had a very good gallop by the Heamies, then over the North Staffordshire Railway, leaving Cold Norton Gorse on the left, also Shallowford and Whitgreave, and beat us near Cresswell Gorse. Drew Micklow Gorse and Tittensor blank. Found in Trentham Wood. Had an unusual gallop. He went away over the Park, and jumped the Park wall, and back again near Gravel Pit Lodge, through the gravel pit, out of the Park, through Hanchurch Gate; then by the new covert into High Greaves Wood, by the dairy, and into Trentham gardens; back through the wood, and ran him to ground at Beech Cliffe. The run from Meece Gorse was very nice. The fox went a good line of country, and fairly straight. The gallop from Trentham Wood was rather exciting, owing to him coming so near the kennels and through the gardens, etc."

The following account of the run on April 4th from Meece Gorse, and of a good day's sport from Mucklestone on April 7th, appeared in the *Field* of April 12th, 1902 :—

## THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUNDS.

There was a considerable gathering with these hounds at Meece House on Friday, April 4th. It looked as if every one from far and near had made up his mind to take part in what was generally supposed to be the last day of the season, and they were not disappointed in the sport that awaited them. Meece Gorse was first visited, and hounds were hardly in before they were out on the other side, and ere we could get round they were across a field or two, and pointing for the Heamies Farm, but, turning to the left, crossed the North Staffordshire Railway, and it looked as if we were going direct to Cold Norton Gorse. We left it, however, a field away on our left, and, turning sharply to the right, ran close to Norton Farm, and then took up the grassland between Shallowford Gorse and Green Hill. The further we went the faster grew the pace, and hounds simply rushed over Worston Farm on towards Whitgreave; but, leaving that village on our left, ran nearly to Bridgford. Then turning to the left, we carried the line within a couple of fields of Creswell Gorse, and here scent failed after as good a forty minutes as we have had during the season; indeed, I heard one enthusiastic sportsman declare it to be the best he had been in. Wire was plentiful during the latter part of the run, and Mr. Davenport, son of a former Master of the North Stafford, had his horse's fetlock badly cut with it.

Just a few lines about another bye day we had on Monday, April 7th, at Mucklestone. Trotting at once to Oakley, we drew the top end of the pool, and a fox was halloaed away on the other side, but hounds made short work of him after crossing a few fields. Our next draw was the osiers at Bearstone, where a fox was soon afoot with the hounds close to his brush. He gained on them at the first fence, and ran parallel to the Woore road, then crossed and took the private road for Bellaport. Turning to the left, he crossed the railway, and ran along it nearly to Norton, where he again crossed and took us up to Bellaport Old Hall; then, turning to the right into Bellaport Wood, he found safety. We then trotted back to Winnington, and drew the wood adjoining. A fox was quickly out on the other side, and made for Willoughbridge Farm, but squatting in a thick fence, the hounds ran by him, and he quietly galloped back home. After a while hounds retraced their steps, and hit on his line through the next covert, and ran him over the turf almost to Ashley Heath, when he turned to the left into the Forty Acres. Passing quickly through this covert, we enjoyed a swinging gallop across the big turf fields to Willoughbridge Park, and passing out at Willoughbridge Wells, we kept on better terms with the hounds, as they proceeded more leisurely, but not less surely, after their fox towards Knighton, which we left on our right, and carried the line to the osiers at Bearstone. We were at fault for a short time here, but luckily some one viewed the fox crossing the bridge at Bearstone Mill, which put us right again, and hounds secured their quarry at Napley Heath, a little further on. A good day this to finish the season. It was marred at the outset, unfortunately, by a slight accident to the Duchess of Sutherland, which all sincerely hope will have no serious consequences. The Master, the Duke of Sutherland, carried the horn on both days, and rode to his hounds, and handled them well throughout. F. S.

The season ended on Tuesday, April 8th, with a fair day's sport from the Gladdings, of which Boxall says—

"Found on Craddock's Moss. Had a good gallop over the Coal-pit Banks. He went away at a good pace through Hayes Wood, Bull Thorn, Scot Hays, to

Red Hill Colliery, by Keele Station, Dun's Wood, and on to Keele Racecourse, Bentilee Wood, and beat us. Found in Holdershaw Wood, but he had gone too long, so did nothing much with him. Found again in Whitmore Wood. Had a nice gallop through Hayes Sprink to Dun's Wood, and beat us. Hounds went fast up to Keele Station, but over an unrideable bit of country, this being our last day of the season. We have had less hunting this year, but better sport. I have not missed one day's hunting from beginning to finish."

Record for the season: sixty-five foxes killed, fifty-five run to ground; ninety days' hunting altogether. Stopped by frost for thirty days.

Subscriptions amounted to about £2100, out of which the Poultry and Covert Fund absorbed £545, and a sum of about £440 was spent in removing wire and laying fences, and in cutting and fencing gorse coverts.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### FARMERS AND FOX-HUNTING.

THE welfare of any Hunt so largely depends upon the good-will and co-operation of the tenant farmers of the district, that no Hunt book would seem complete without something more than a passing reference to the obligations under which fox-hunters are placed to the farmers whose land they ride over, and without whose forbearance and loyal support hunting would be simply impossible. We have already, in earlier chapters of this volume, expressed our sense of the loyalty of the farmers as a body to the cause of fox-hunting in the North Staffordshire country, but the subject is one that calls for and requires more than a merely casual reference of this kind. We are aware that there is a tendency amongst certain persons to represent the British farmer as a proverbial and wholesale grumbler who is always growling at the weather and the seasons, and the crops, at the prices of stock and produce; as a man who is never satisfied, whatever is done for him by his landlord or his neighbours. The present writer is far from sharing this view. On the contrary, after a long and tolerably intimate knowledge of the farmers of this country, he confesses to being often astonished at their patience and contentment under trials and difficulties which beset them almost more than any class of men.

What class is there who carry on their business under more adverse circumstances than the agriculturist class? Who is there that has to contend with circumstances over

MEET AT SIDWAY.

*From a photo by Whitlock, Birmingham.*

which he has no control to the same extent as the unfortunate farmer?

If he should by perseverance and good luck grow excellent crops of corn or other produce in any year, he never has the certainty that he can safely reap or store either the one or the other. A wet July, or August, or September, may, without any fault whatever on the part of the farmer, shatter and ruin the best-founded hopes of a thoroughly successful harvest which the hard work of the early spring months, or the propitious weather in the months of May or June, may have reasonably led him to anticipate; or probably he may find that the bountiful harvests over the seas and the abundant importation of foreign corn from our cousins on the other side of the Atlantic have brought down the price of his ever-so-well harvested corn and produce to an altogether unremunerative figure, and this without the slightest fault on his own part, and from circumstances altogether beyond his control.

No wonder, then, if the British farmer does occasionally indulge in a growl; no wonder that he is not always to be found, like Mark Tapley, "jolly" whatever happens. Even under the most favourable circumstances farming can never be a very lucrative business. Far be it from us, then, to withhold from our farmers the meed of sympathy and good-will which, although it may often cost little or nothing to the giver, is generally more or less welcome to the recipient. Applying these principles to the relations between fox-hunters and tenant farmers, let us see how we stand. Nothing can be more certain than this proposition: That it is entirely owing to the courtesy of the farmer that we are able to hunt at all, and are allowed to ride over his land. The least we can do in return for this is to treat him, on our part, with every possible courtesy and consideration; and there are, we submit, many tangible and solid ways in which fox-hunters, without entailing any appreciable loss or doing any harm to the sportsman, can do this, and in doing it may help to popularize the cause of fox-hunting with the farming class to a material extent. We are well aware of the old stock argument, that fox-hunting is a source of profit to the farmers of this country, and that if fox-hunting were abolished farmers would be the greatest sufferers. To a certain extent this is undoubtedly true, but it is an argument which has not quite as much force as some writers appear to think. The pecuniary loss which would ensue from the abolition of fox-hunting would be more of a general than an individual kind, while the damage done by fox-hunting is emphatically an individual damage brought home to the mind of the particular farmer whose crops are damaged, whose fowls are taken, whose lambs are killed, whose fences are ruined, or whose seeds are ridden over, and in many cases without any compensation being either asked for or bestowed.

The damage, as we have just said, is very direct and visible, and there is no doubt about it in the mind of the farmer who suffers; whilst the profit, if any, arising from the higher price of corn and horseflesh by reason of fox-hunting is extremely difficult to trace to its source, and more often than not does not affect the individual farmer whose crops or fences or stock have suffered from the hounds and horsemen crossing his fields. The following extract from the *Manchester Courier* of March 24th, 1902, shows what the feeling of the farmers of the Cheshire Hunt (which adjoins the North Stafford country) is on the subject, and we do not think very much fault can be found with the farmers' views as there reported.

### FARMERS AND FOX-HUNTING.

#### NANTWICH AGRICULTURISTS AND THEIR GRIEVANCES.

The Nantwich Farmers' Club, on Saturday evening, discussed the question of hunting grievances.

Mr. Jos. Furber said in preferring reasonable grievances for settlement by the Hunt they should be united. A person who could afford to hunt regularly could afford to pay for the privilege. The question was one for the Hunt to tackle with a view to the settlement of the amount of subscription which should be paid, and he suggested that claims for the loss of poultry, stock, and exceptional damage to growing crops and clover root should be dealt with by a joint committee of assessors, consisting of farmers and representatives of the Hunt. Any one who followed hounds occasionally should contribute accordingly to a damage fund. He referred to the fact that a number of hunting gentlemen purchased fodder from farmers, and remarked that if some means could be devised for extending business relations between farmers and the Hunt, farmers would not object to a good customer riding over their land. (Hear, hear!)

The Chairman (Mr. John Hobson) said that as a class farmers were not antagonistic to hunting, but they desired to see the fields greatly reduced.

Mr. James Sadler (secretary) said the grievances which farmers required to be redressed arose from the large fields, insufficient remuneration for damage done, and the lack of an organization establishing direct dealing between farmers and hunting men. The principal grievance was that the fields were too large.

Mr. Thomas Dutton (Ash House) said that where formerly there was a field of about eighty horsemen there were now sometimes four hundred horsemen.

Mr. Lea (Hunterson) said that the Hunt should be asked to acquire hunting rights by paying so much an acre for the land over which hounds ran.

A resolution was moved by the chairman, seconded by Mr. Allwood, appointing a committee to formulate the grievances of farmers, and to appeal to the Hunt Committee to arrange a conference with a view to their being redressed, and was unanimously passed.

The whole subject is one which has been often considered, and much has been written and said about it from both sides of the question, but it cannot be too carefully and considerately handled by those who, while wishing well to fox-hunting, realize that farmers must be fairly treated and that their just grievances should be met with the utmost fairness and even with generosity. We have not the slightest doubt that Masters of Foxhounds and Hunt Committees as a general rule do show the greatest consideration for the farming interest, and as a rule we believe that farmers for the most part do not resent their land being ridden over by their neighbours, and by men they know to be residents and *bonâ fide* sportsmen. But the large fields from the manufacturing centres and the gentlemen who are here to-day and gone to-morrow are the cause of much heart-burning and discontent, and too often sportsmen of this class, who know nothing, and care less, about farming matters, are the men who, by treating the farmer with scant courtesy when they come across him on his farm while out with hounds, tend to bring the noble sport into disrepute, and in some cases give rise to serious friction.

What, then, is the remedy for this state of things? and how can an *entente cordiale* be thoroughly established and maintained between the fox-hunter and the farmer? We do not think that any one sovereign remedy can be prescribed which should at once and for ever do away with all friction between two classes whose interests must to some extent necessarily clash, but we are convinced that much may be done, by thoughtful and considerate treatment on the part of sportsmen, to reconcile farmers to the existence of fox-hunting in their midst, and we venture to think that one of the speakers at the Nantwich Farmers' Club hit the right nail on the head when he remarked "that if some means could be devised for extending business relations between farmers and the Hunt, farmers would not object to a good customer riding over their land."

The same speaker also suggested "that claims for loss of poultry, stock, and exceptional damage to growing crops and clover root should be dealt with by a joint committee of assessors consisting of farmers and representatives of the Hunt." In the North Staffordshire Hunt we may observe that this plan has practically been adopted for years, the Poultry Fund and Damage Committee having for many years past consisted of farmers and fox-hunters in something like equal proportions; and this has been found to work on the whole exceedingly well, the farmers bringing to bear not only an invaluable knowledge of the subject, but also evidencing a desire to treat the claims, as a rule, with commendable fairness and moderation. We do not know in how many other Hunts the same rule prevails, but we imagine that in very many carefully managed Hunts something of the kind exists.

Then in the matter of purchases of forage much may be done, and has been done, to promote the purchase of oats and hay and straw directly from the farmers of the district, and so to put the full profit into the pocket of the farmer, where it ought to go, instead of into the pocket of the dealer, and thus help to popularize the cause of fox-hunting with the tenant farmers of the district. In North Staffordshire considerable pains and trouble have been taken to establish this practice, but it is by no means an easy thing to organize, and it may well be that there is still room for improvement in this respect; but we are sure that it is from no want of pains on the part of the Master and the Hunt Committee if the practice is not so general as could be desired.

We have already quoted with approval in an earlier chapter the circular on this subject issued by the joint secretaries in the year 1888, setting forth the material help to farmers that would ensue if members of the Hunt would make a point of purchasing, as far as possible, their corn, hay, and straw direct from the farmers. This was followed up about a year later by another circular from the Hon. Secretaries in the following terms:—

"April, 1889.

"DEAR SIR,

"At the meeting of members of the Covert Fund Committee held at Trentham Hall by invitation of the Marquis of Stafford, on March 5th last, it was unanimously admitted that the advantages to tenant farmers arising from a country being hunted were considerable. It was thought desirable that the amount expended upon hunting in the North Staffordshire country should be ascertained, and with this object in view the Hon. Secretaries were requested to communicate with each subscriber.

"We shall therefore feel obliged if you would kindly fill in the amounts you have paid for articles enumerated as annexed, and return the same by an early post.

"The Secretaries will be very glad to forward to any subscriber requiring forage, the names of farmers from whom the same can be obtained upon reasonable terms.

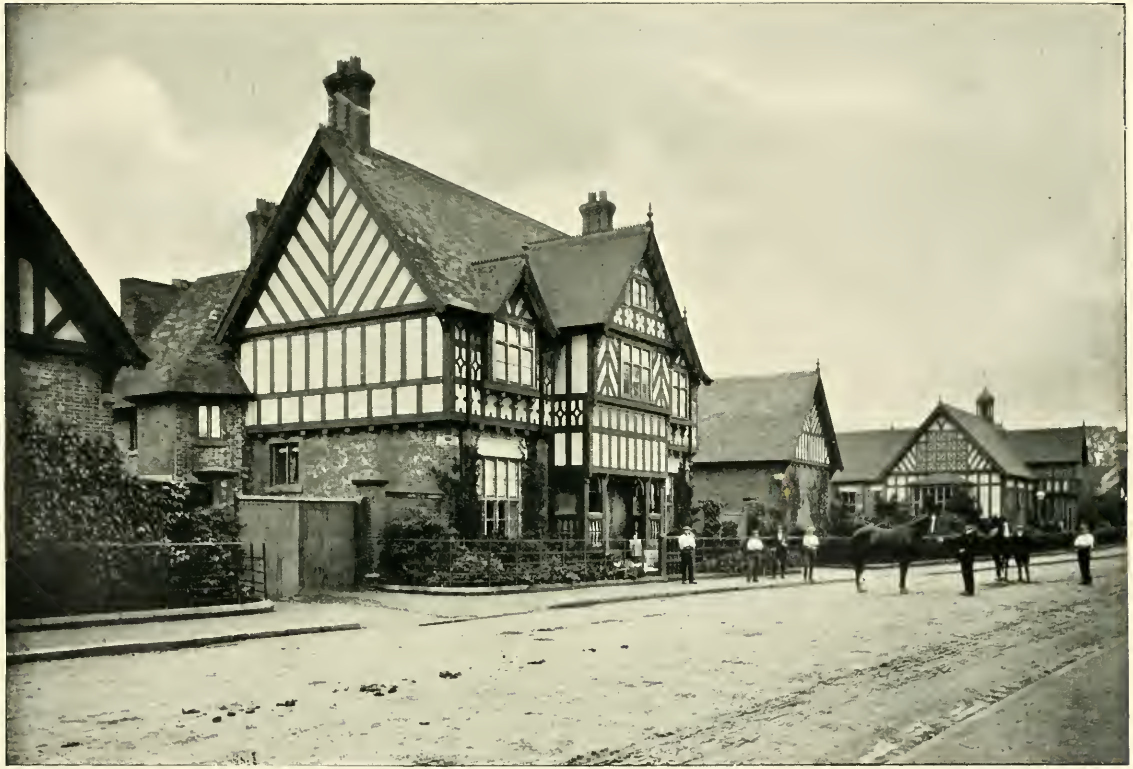
"Yours faithfully,
"RICHARD BOOTE,
"ALEXANDER SIMPSON, } Hon. Secretaries."

We think most of our readers will agree with us that the steps thus taken by the North Staffordshire Hunt Committee were in the right direction, and even if the response from the members of the Hunt has not been so general as it should have been, there can be no question that a valuable stimulus to the system of direct dealing with the farmers of the district was thus given, and, at any rate, the agriculturists of North Staffordshire have had gratifying proof that their interests were well looked after by the Master and the Hunt Committee.

Although we have not the same personal knowledge of what is done in this respect in other hunting countries, we have every reason to believe that many other hunting authorities are equally alive to the importance of dealing fairly, and even generously, with the farmers in their own neighbourhood, and we think that the farmers throughout the country as a class would readily admit that, on the whole, they are fairly dealt with by their Master of Foxhounds and the Hunt Committees.

There are other ways in which the interests of the agriculturist can be materially helped by the promoters of fox-hunting. Every one knows that in these days farmers must go in for breeding good animals, either in the way of dairy stock, or horseflesh, or both, and so get their names up in the prize ring, if they are to obtain good prices and make farming a really profitable business. In our own Hunt, the Master and the leading supporters of the Hunt give an excellent fillip to this up-to-date movement by providing (as we have elsewhere mentioned) substantial prizes both for dairy stock and horses at the annual show held at Trentham each summer, at the same time as the puppy judging. These prizes produce keen competition every year, and it is noteworthy that the winners at Trentham often carry off prizes for the same animals at the larger shows outside the area of the North Staffordshire Hunt. This annual function, combining with the show a pleasant picnic in the park, and winding up with a convivial champagne luncheon, to which the farmers are invited, at which the Duke presides, and which is usually graced with the presence of the Duchess and the ladies of the house party, is a most enjoyable gala day, and does much to add to the popularity of the Hunt with the tenant farmers.

Then, again, much may be done by the M.F.H. in any country to help the farmers in the way of horse-breeding by providing a sire for the use of mares belong-



TRENTHAM HUNT STABLES AND INSTITUTE.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

ing to *bonâ fide* tenant farmers free of cost. This is done regularly in the North Staffordshire Hunt and in many others with very satisfactory results.

One most important point in every well-managed Hunt is to see that the Covert Fund and Damage Committee is fairly constituted, and that it does its work well and justly between the Hunt and the farmers who send in claims for the loss of poultry or lambs, or for other kinds of damage. There is a natural tendency, perhaps, on the part of an average fox-hunter on the committee to look upon these claims with some suspicion. This is corrected in the best and most satisfactory way in our opinion by having a fair proportion of tenant farmers on the committee, who will hold the balance straight, and who, if there really is a well-grounded suspicion of a fraudulent claim, will be far more likely to discover the truth about it than the fox-hunting members of the same committee. There can, unfortunately, be no doubt that every now and then a trumped-up claim is sent in, and it is only right that claims should be carefully investigated, especially where the claimant is either unknown to the committee or where what is known is not to his credit. We all know the time-honoured story of the claimant who began by claiming for fowls, then for geese, then for turkeys, next year for lambs, then for a calf; whereupon the M.F.H. sent a cheque with the remark that the claimant must not forget to let him know as soon as the fox took his cow! At the same time the committee should never treat a claim as fictitious unless they have clear proof that it is so; for it goes without saying that nothing is more certain to make a farmer an enemy to fox-hunting for the rest of his life, than to be told, without good foundation, that the Hunt Committee consider he has made a fictitious claim. When the authorities are satisfied that the claim is good, they should settle promptly, and not be cheeseparing as to the amount. In the North Staffordshire Hunt (in the writer's time, and no doubt it still continues), we had a regular scale of allowance, so much for fowls, geese, turkeys, etc., etc.; and as this was on a fairly liberal estimate of value, we do not think there is ever much complaint as to the quantum of allowance.

As to damage to crops, any M.F.H. can do a good deal if he chooses, by setting a good example in the way of avoiding seeds and wheat when riding to hounds, and by enforcing this on his field, if need be, by precept as well as example. In this matter we do not hesitate to say that, in our opinion, the North Staffordshire Hunt occupies a strong position.

There is another small matter, but perhaps it is worth mentioning, and it is this: in dealing with the farmer for forage purchased from him, if possible make your bargain with him yourself as to price, and when it comes to paying, pay promptly and send him your cheque direct through the post, not through your groom.

We do not want to be wearisome in dealing with this part of our subject, important though we believe it to be; after all that can be said or written, the solution resolves itself into the golden rule, "Do as you would be done by." Treat the British farmer fairly and squarely. Let him see that you mean to be his friend; that you wish to enjoy your sport, but at your own expense, and not at his; that you are ready to deal with him for whatever you want and he can supply on fair terms; and there will be no friction between yourself and him, at any rate, and you will have the satisfaction of feeling that you have made, or kept, one more friend to fox-hunting.

We have ventured to say so much on this well-worn subject, because we believe that most of the unpleasantness that may have arisen between farmers and hunting men has been caused rather by thoughtlessness than from any intention to ignore or neglect the farming interest; we believe the well-known lines—

> "For evil is wrought by want of thought
> As much as by want of heart,"

to be very true; and if any young sportsman who may happen to read these words of ours shall ponder over them, and find that they commend themselves to his mature judgment, the writer will at least feel that he has not wasted his time in giving honest expression to the views which he has formed after many years' experience of fox-hunting, and of service on Hunt and Covert Fund Committees.

As an Irishman would say, however, "reciprocity ought not to be all on one side," and though we warmly advocate the kindest and most considerate treatment of our farming neighbours, we venture to think that this sort of treatment, amongst other recommendations, ought surely to strengthen the sportsman's claim to be listened to and met fairly in the vexed question of wire, which is such a danger to life and limb to those who hunt.

# CHAPTER XX.

## TRENTHAM ANNUAL SHOW—CUB-HUNTING—FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE NORTH STAFFORD HUNT.

THE latest North Staffordshire Hunt Agricultural Show and Puppy Judging Luncheon was held on July 24th, 1902, and is thus reported at length in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of the same week:

### NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HUNT AGRICULTURAL SHOW.

The tenth annual meeting under the auspices of the Master and gentlemen of the North Staffordshire Hunt was held at Trentham on Thursday. This exhibition is limited to exhibitors being tenant farmers, or farmers owning not more than fifty acres, residing and farming on their own account within the district of the Hunt. All exhibits must be the *bonâ fide* property of the exhibitors, and must have been so from April 1st last, and with a few exceptions all animals exhibited must have been bred within the limits of the Hunt. There is a stringent rule disqualifying any exhibitor having strands of wire in fences on his farm who refuses to let the same be removed during the hunting season at the expense of the Hunt. As is well known, this question of the use of barbed wire requires continual watching in the interests of the Hunt. Skilled hedgers are employed on the Trentham estate to demonstrate the best methods of preserving and adding to the hedgerows, which form so characteristic a part of English landscapes. In furtherance of the same object, the Hunt give prizes for the best-fenced farms.

The Duke of Sutherland, M.F.H., is president of the exhibition, and it was a subject of regret that owing to their absence from Trentham neither the Duke nor the Duchess was present at the show. It will be gratifying to them to know that they were held in the kindest remembrance throughout the proceedings of the day. The vice-presidents are Sir Delves Broughton, Bart., Major Stamer, Messrs. W. E. Bowers, H. Ker Colville, W. W. Dobson, B. Fitzherbert, F. J. Harrison, G. E. Meakin, James Meakin, J. W. Philips, A. W. Radford-Norcop, R. Sneyd, and T. W. Twyford. The committee is formed as follows: Mr. J. W. Philips (chairman), Mr. W. W. Dobson (vice-chairman), Sir George Chetwode, Bart., Major Stamer, Messrs. J. S. Billington, J. Bourne, W. E. Bowers, C. Byrd, H. Ker Colville, F. J. Harrison, A. W. Leedam, J. Q. Lamb, F. G. Mather, James Meakin, George Menzies, A. W. Radford-Norcop, Alexander

Simpson, Edward Simpson, W. E. Stamer, H. Toon, T. Wibberley, R. S. Wilkinson, and R. N. Wood (treasurer), with Mr. J. Meadows, of Mucklestone, as secretary. The other officials were—Stewards: Hunters, Messrs. H. Toon, R. Hill, and E. Eaton; harness horses, Messrs. F. W. Furnival and J. Dean; agricultural horses, Messrs. C. J. Bowers and E. Bagnall; cattle, Messrs. J. Walker and P. Edwards; cheese and butter, Messrs. A. Hocknell and E. Robinson; poultry and eggs, Mr. F. Bourne. Judges: Hunters, Messrs. J. Akenhead and R. P. Cooper; harness horses, Messrs. W. H. Burton and A. C. Goodson; agricultural horses, Messrs. Joseph Hill and T. J. Dutton; cattle, Messrs. G. G. Blantern and S. Dodd; cheese and butter, Mr. J. Pakeman; poultry, eggs, and honey, Mr. H. W. Bennion; veterinary surgeons, Messrs. J. W. Coe, R. Stevenson, and R. C. Trigger. The general arrangements were admirably carried out by Mr. Meadows and his staff of assistants. The greatest interest in regard to everything pertaining to the success of the show was taken by Mr. Alexander Simpson, the Duke's private secretary.

The young hounds walked by tenant farmers in the North Staffordshire country were judged at the Kennels. The task of adjudicating was entrusted to Mr. Reginald Corbet (South Cheshire Hunt), Mr. German Shepherd (South Notts), and George Whitmore (of the Atherstone Hunt). The entry comprised twenty-one couples—nine couples of dogs and twelve of bitches. The awards were as follows:—Dogs: (1) Ringwood, Mr. Blockley, Aston Cliff; (2) Pilgrim, Mr. Blade, Betley; (3) Sinbad, Mr. Hough, Black Lake. Bitches: (1) Stella, Miss Hart, Moddershall; (2) Pliant, Mr. Wilkinson, Madeley; (3) Silvia, Mr. Lawton, Baldwin's Gate. The first prize in each class was a silver cup, the second a lady's silk dress, and the third a piece of plate.

Starting with very small beginnings, the Trentham Agricultural Exhibition has attained proportions which place it well to the front in local shows. When the first meeting was held in 1893, there were sixty-eight entries. Then, however, there were only two classes, for light and heavy horses, the introduction of cattle and sheep taking place in 1895. At the present show the classes for sheep were discontinued in consequence of dwindling competition in recent years, there having been only eight entries at the last show. In 1895 there were twenty-nine entries of sheep. The total number of entries in all sections this year was 223, as compared with 269 at the previous exhibition. The comparative figures with last year's show were as follows:—Light horses (hunters), 1901, 57; 1902, 48. Light horses (harness), 28—26; heavy horses, 58—46; cattle, 53—43; cheese, 19—21; butter, 24—15; eggs and poultry, 18—20; honey, 4—4. The weather on Thursday morning was unfortunately very wet, and prevented many from attending who would otherwise have been present.

A principal feature of the exhibition was the show of horses. The hunters were a very level lot, and it was a matter of general remark that it becomes harder each year to win at Trentham. The agricultural horses showed splendid form, and yearlings and two-year-olds in particular were unanimously voted equal to anything seen at the Royal Show. It was pertinently said that there was no tail among them. The show of cattle was very fair, but not up to last year's exhibits, especially in the dairy classes. It was noticed that in several of the cattle classes the entrants were not in evidence. In the class for coloured cheese there was not a single lot that did not deserve a prize. In white cheese there were a few lots not quite so good. In butter the quality was remarkably high. There was on view on the ground an ingenious invention exhibited by the Leicestershire Timber Company, known as the Hincks Patent Fox Excluder. Mr. Hincks, the inventor, will be remembered as being formerly in business as an auctioneer at Uttoxeter, and a member of the Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture. It is a very simple appliance—made to fix on the bolt-hole of a fowl-house, and makes it impossible for a fox to enter, although no hindrance is offered to the hens going out. At the recent show at Peterborough it was awarded a medal "for improved machinery benefiting agriculture."

The luncheon, to which the judges, puppy-walkers, tenants, and members and friends of the Hunt were invited, was held in a large marquee erected in the courtyard of the Hall. In the absence of the Duke, Mr. J. W. Philips (Chairman of the Hunt Committee) presided. In all, the guests numbered about 250, while, owing to the limited accommodation, an overflow luncheon was served in the tent on the show-ground, at which some 150 other guests were present. The Duke and Duchess being absent from home, there was no house party at the Hall, as has frequently been the case in former years. Among those present were Lord Henry Grosvenor, Sir Morton Manningham-Buller, Bart., Colonel Dobson (vice-chairman of the Hunt Committee), Mr. Reginald Corbet, Major Stamer, Mr. R. W. Radford-Norcop, the Rev. E. V. Pigott, Mr. T. W. Twyford, Mr. E. J. W. Wood, Mr. Alexander Simpson, Mr. F. J. Harrison, Mr. H. A. Wiggin, Mr. W. E. Stamer, the Rev. P. E. Mainwaring, Mr. F. G. Mather, Mr. James Hall, Mr. E. A. Ridgway, the Rev. Edward Salt, Messrs. J. Kendrick (chairman of the Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture), J. H. Knight, J. G. Knight, A. W. Leedam, G. F. Paddock, C. E. Challinor, Mr. W. D. Phillips, Captain Edwards-Heathcote, Chief Supt. Hill, Messrs. Timmis (Bromley Mill), Timmis (Charnes Old Hall), Lakin (Northwood Farm), R. S. Wilkinson (Swinchurch), W. Blockley (Moor Hall), J. Blockley (Radwood), Cartlich (Manor House, Woore), T. Wood (Wrinehill Hall), Noden (Norton-in-Hales), W. Wilkinson (Madeley), Turnock (Madeley), Adams (Audley), Sillito (Bromley Hall), Foster (Trent Vale), J. Q. Lamb (Hanchurch), Bourne (Madeley), Birtles (Micklow House), R. D. Garde (Eccleshall), Silvester (Tittensor), Emberton (Brockton Hall), Holdcroft (Stoke-by-Stone), Peake (Hanford), Jackson (Market Drayton), Bourne (Norton Wood), Felton, Webb, Hull, Lander, Pitchford, Wittle, Lea, Bromley, Mason (Lilleshall), and many others of the tenantry on the Trentham and Lilleshall estates. Apologies had been received from the High Sheriff (Mr. R. P. Copeland), who was detained by his duties at the Assizes, Sir Hill Child, Bart., and other gentlemen.

Grace before and after meat was said by the Rev. E. V. Pigott, R.D., vicar of Trentham. During the excellent luncheon provided by Messrs. A. Bayley and Son, Newcastle, selections of music were given by the band of the Staffordshire Royal Imperial Yeomanry, under the accomplished bâton of Mr. Gladman.

The Chairman, in proposing the health of the King, said there never was a time when this toast would be more heartily welcomed than at present. His Majesty had gone through a most serious crisis. He had faced his sufferings with the utmost patience and determination, and he was now, they had every reason to hope, on the fair way to a happy recovery. (Applause.) There was no one who had done more than the King for the cause of agriculture, and in this respect he had only followed in the footsteps of Royalty for many years. They could go back to the time of old George III., who gloried in the name of farmer. And her late Majesty and the Prince Consort were great promoters of the rearing of good cattle. The Chairman also proposed "The healths of Queen Alexandra and the Prince and Princess of Wales and the rest of the Royal Family," the loyal toasts being drunk with musical honours. The Chairman next proposed "The Successful Competitors," who, he remarked, were men to whom the country owed a great deal for taking the pains of rearing the best kinds of stock and bringing them forward for exhibition on occasions like the present. These local shows were now of very great value. Since the decision of the Royal Society to give up its migratory meetings and to meet near London as a permanent home, the importance of the local shows would be very much increased all through the country. He need not say to an assembly like that how important it was that they should do all in their power to keep up the character of their live stock, which still held the first place among the live stock of the world. (Applause.) He need not enlarge on the point, because it was seen in every market that good qualities were appreciated and inferior ones neglected, and they must hope that every farmer would do all he could to raise the best stock. Their opportunities for doing so were very much greater than they were years ago, and every one should endeavour to avail themselves of the opportunities now offered. (Applause).

Mr. Blockley (Aston Cliff). who was first called upon to respond, said his puppy was the first one he had ever walked, and he was pleased to think that he had won the first prize. He found that there was no use in walking a hound unless they gave him plenty of liberty and plenty to eat. His puppy ate a ham one morning. (Laughter.) But in spite of the ham he would be very pleased to walk another one for his Grace. (Applause.)

Mr. R. S. Wilkinson and Mr. Hobson (Weston Hall) responded for the successful exhibitors of horses and cattle respectively.

Major Stamer, in proposing the health of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, said they all knew that it was a great disappointment to the Duke not to be present among them, and they could be sure that though not with them in person he was with them in spirit. (Applause.) His Grace knew full well that he could meet no better friends anywhere than the tenant farmers of North Staffordshire. (Applause.) The Duke became fonder of hunting every year, and but for that they might not have his presence so much at Trentham in the winter. They regretted that the Duchess had not been out with them so much as in former years. Her health had not been all that could be wished, and, as they knew, her time was not always her own. There was no good cause in North Staffordshire to support, or bazaar to attend, but she was there. He hoped that in the near future bazaars, with barbed wire, would become things of the past in North Staffordshire, and that they would see her Grace out much oftener with the hounds. (Applause.) He was sure they all felt great satisfaction that his Majesty had conferred upon the Duke the Knighthood of the Garter. It was a great pleasure to all of them, and he was sure that no one could be more deserving of the honour. (The band played the air which is usually associated with a toast warmly received, and three times three cheers were given for the Duke and Duchess, and one more for their children.)

Sir Morton Manningham-Buller, in complimentary terms, proposed the health of the judges, and hoped to see some of them at the county show at Uttoxeter next month.

Mr. Reginald Corbet, in responding on behalf of the judges of hounds, said it was very gratifying to see so many farmers walking hounds for the Duke. If it were not for them it would be impossible for the Duke to keep the pack up to its state of efficiency. There was only one thing that gave greater respectability to a farmhouse than a puppy, and that was two puppies. (Laughter and applause.) Moreover, two puppies gave a better chance of a prize, and, he thought, were less likely to do mischief than one. He himself walked three or four, and he found that they played together and did not do much harm. (Applause.)

Mr. R. P. Cooper, who responded for the judges of hunters, said he found it difficult to get away from the stereotyped expression that they had done their best, and he hoped they had pleased everybody. No assurance was necessary that they had done their best according to their lights, but as to pleasing everybody, that, he thought, was an impossibility. He would ask those who were not pleased to remember that the judges were absolutely free from bias or influence, and that they had opportunities of noting the various points of the animals that those outside the ring had not. He with his colleague could sincerely congratulate them on the exhibits that had been before them. The best thanks of all breeders of horses in that neighbourhood were due to the Duke of Sutherland for providing them with so excellent a sire. He had noted the remarks of the Chairman with regard to the importance of local societies. It was far from his mind to say anything against the Royal or the larger societies, but he believed that from the educational point of view a society like that did far more good. They had a better opportunity of judging the points of the animals, and he hoped that the younger generation especially would discuss these points until the show came round again. He was sure they all had a great deal to learn. England was in the forefront now, but Germany and France were making rapid strides, and received help from their Governments which we did not receive. In this country horse-breeding was left to private enterprise. Therefore they could not do better than turn their attention to the various points of the animals at that and other shows. (Applause.)

Mr. Radford Norcop, in proposing "The Tenant Farmers of the North Staffordshire Hunt, and Success to Agriculture," said he could say, without using the language of flattery, that there were very few Hunts that had so good a body of tenant farmers as those connected with the North Staffordshire Hunt. All of them took very great interest in fox-hunting. In addition to that, it would be very difficult to meet with a more practical body of agriculturists. With regard to the season prospects, he certainly could not remember for a great number of years when the crops had been so magnificent as at the present time. With good weather, they would have a grand harvest. (Applause.)

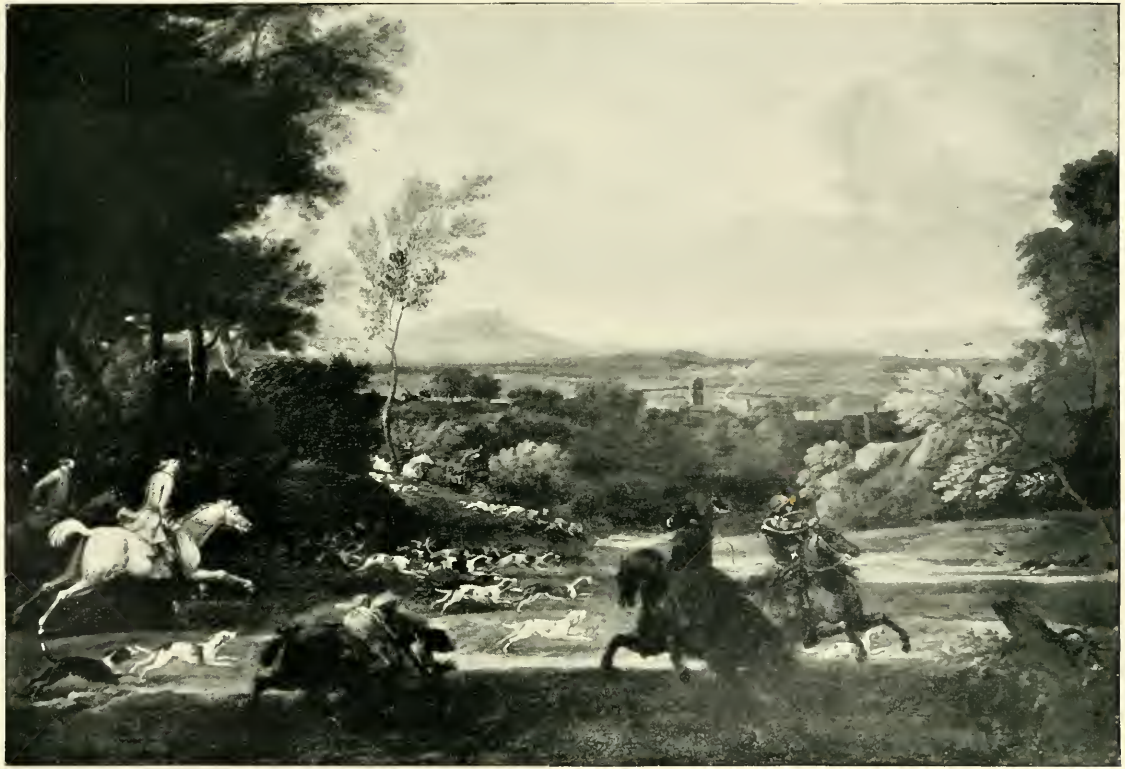
Mr. J. E. Bourne, who was called upon to respond, said that in twenty-five years he had never known such a changeable season, but as it was their crops had almost grown out of the fields. They could now only hope for fine weather to gather them. (Applause.)

Mr. E. Simpson, who also responded, agreed that if they had good weather to secure their crops, they would have a bountiful harvest.

Mr. F. J. Harrison proposed the health of the Chairman, and hoped they would see him for many years to come with them in the hunting-field. As chairman of the Hunt Committee, Mr. Philips had been of the greatest service, and his advice was at all times most valuable.

The toast was drunk with musical honours, and Mr. Philips, who mentioned that he had been a member of the Hunt since 1847, having expressed his acknowledgments, the proceedings at the luncheon terminated.

While the writer is engaged on the last pages of his manuscript in the early autumn of this year (1902), he is reminded that cub-hunting has just begun, and that he has scarcely said a word about that important, though perhaps not very interesting, department of fox-hunting;



HUNTING-SCENE IN LEICESTERSHIRE, JOHN LORD GOWER ON WHITE HORSE.

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle, from a painting at Trentham by J. Wootton.*

not interesting, we mean, in the literary sense—still, in a woodland country like North Staffordshire, the cubbing department ought not to be passed over altogether in silence. No one who knows anything practically of fox-hunting requires to be told that cub-hunting is not only a pleasant, but a most useful and necessary, prelude to the arduous work of the regular season; but the proportion of sportsmen who are willing to get up at five or six o'clock on a September morning and spend four hours in galloping up and down woodland rides to the music of the horn and the huntsman's "Tally-ho back," is not large compared with the roll of members of any Hunt, and it is scarcely possible to construct a narrative of any morning's sport in the cubbing season which will be of the slightest interest to the general reader. Nevertheless, the cub-hunting time is of the greatest importance to any Hunt, and without it neither hounds, horses, nor foxes could be said to have received a proper education. As the good preparatory school is to Eton or Harrow, so is the discipline of cub-hunting to the serious work of the regular season; in short, as some one has said—we are not sure who or where —"a pack is made or marred in cub-hunting." Young hounds then learn "what's what," horses find out how to negotiate blind ditches, and young foxes discover what it is to have forty or fifty hungry and speedy foes behind them, and soon learn the inevitable lesson that if they wish to live a little longer they must harden their hearts and go ahead.

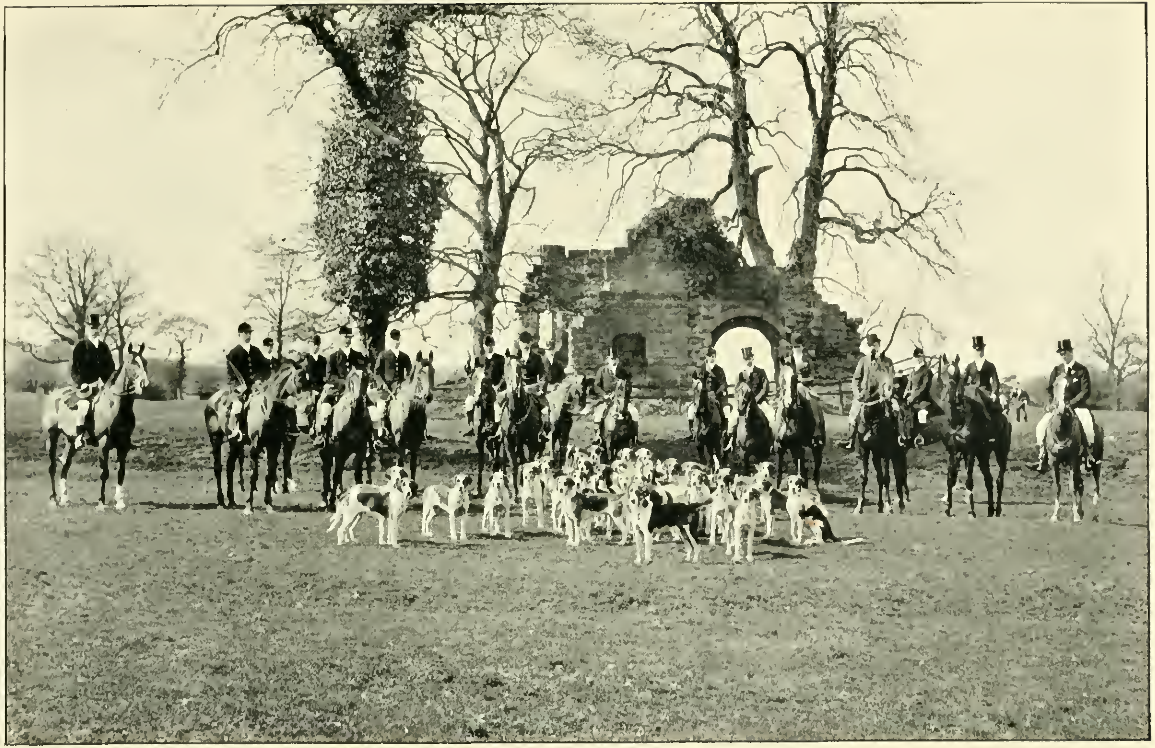
Notwithstanding the impossibility of making an exciting story out of a morning's cub-hunting, the writer knows few things more pleasant than an early morning ride on one of those grand September mornings such as we often have even in this fickle and much-abused climate of ours—the air fresh and crisp; just a soupçon of autumn tints, but barely a soupçon, in the oak woods we are drawing; the silken gossamer on bracken and grass; the full pack of hounds, young and old, in itself surely a sight well worth getting up early to see; the business-like huntsman and whips in pink, perhaps some ten or twelve real sportsmen in tweeds, all out for sport, and not for show; no crowd, no tight boots or top-hats. What can be more delightful or more wholesome than this? Nevertheless, it is rather melancholy to think how few will take the trouble to get up early and see for themselves what it is like. Besides all this, every now and again you may find yourself (especially in the latter part of the cubbing time) riding after a real sporting customer, who will give you quite as good and fast a gallop across the open country as you will get four or five weeks later, when the regular hunting comes in with the month of November. We need scarcely say that in North Staffordshire cub-hunting forms a really important item in the programme. In a favourable season, when corn is forward, and the ground not too hard or dry, the North Staffordshire Hounds begin early and stick to it right up to the end of October, often putting in four days a week for ten or twelve weeks.

So far as our experience extends, we should suppose there are not many hunting countries with such an area of large woodlands as the North Stafford country. We have already briefly alluded to this in the chapter on the general characteristics of the country; but we may, perhaps, be allowed to refer again to some of the chief woodlands in this connection. The very extensive woods near Eccleshall, known as the Bishop's Woods and Burnt Woods, extending altogether, we believe, to something like one thousand one hundred acres, part belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and part to the Hon. Mrs. Meynell Ingram, are perhaps the largest coverts in the North Stafford country, and are often visited in the cubbing season. Then there are Swynnerton Old Park and Harley Thorn, with the heath and common adjoining, altogether somewhere about eight hundred acres, belonging to Mr. Basil FitzHerbert; these coverts are only about two miles from the kennels, and have often done good service to the Hunt, both in cub-hunting and the regular season. The coverts at Trentham, Tittensor Chase, and Beech Cliffe, and at Black Lake, near Stallington, Maer Hills, Forty Acres, near Ashley, Wrinehills, Charnes, the Woore coverts, Oakley and Doddington, Moddershall, Draycot Woods, Checkley Wood, Adderley Gorse, the Loggerheads, and the Bitterns, and many other coverts that might be named, all stand plenty of work in the cub-hunting season, and generally supply plenty of "raw" material wherewith to educate the junior members of the pack. We observe, on looking through the huntsmen's diaries for some years past, that cub-hunting has, as a rule, generally begun in North Staffordshire quite late in August, and has of late years been carried on for four days a week, formerly for three days. With the lady pack, it has been usual to take out from twenty-eight to thirty couple or so, and with the dog pack, about twenty-five couple. The cub-hunting days have usually averaged from thirty to forty in a season, and the cubs killed have generally averaged from fifteen to twenty brace, or thereabouts.

These few statistics are perhaps sufficient to show that the Master has by no means neglected this very essential item of the fox-hunting curriculum. We think we should be quite safe if we said that there is scarcely any hunting country where the cubs are more persistently and systematically bustled about than in North Staffordshire, and the Hunt, as a matter of course, reaps the full benefit of this in the sport later on when the regular season sets in. This year we understand Boxall has got an unusually promising lot of young hounds, the weather is only too moist, scent is favourable, and everything seems to augur well for a very successful cub-hunting season, the only drawback being the exceptionally late harvest, which, however (we are writing towards the end of September), cannot be much longer delayed in completion. Maer Hills, and a number of the most reliable cub-hunting coverts, have already been visited with satisfactory results, and given good luck and good weather, the prospects for the coming season of 1902-03 seem quite as bright as ever. We find, on referring again to the huntsmen's diaries for the last two or three seasons, the cub-hunting results have not during those years been quite up to the usual average, but this has been chiefly owing to hot and dry weather in the autumn of the years 1900 and 1901, which curtailed the number of days that hounds were able to hunt in the months of September and October, and, as a matter of course, this materially affected the result in the way of kills ; thus, for the cub-hunting season of 1900, only ten and a half brace of cubs were accounted for, and for the season of 1901 the score happened to be precisely the same.

*À propos* of this department of fox-hunting, Mr. Otho Paget, in the Haddon Hall Library volume on hunting, has some excellent remarks which we venture to quote here.

> "Cub-hunting," says Mr. Paget, "is the period when the pack and the coming season are made. If the Master and huntsman then work hard, they may look forward to enjoying themselves later on. Not later than the first week in September, nor earlier than the middle of August, may be set down as about the time to commence operations. Whilst the weather is hot, hounds should be at the covert side as soon as there is light enough to view a fox away. Pay no attention to what people may say about the ground being too hard, or the weather too dry. If you have given hounds plenty of road work during the summer, their feet won't suffer, and there is very often the best scent in exceptionally dry weather. In cub-hunting you need never consult the wishes of your field, and all you have to think of is what will be the best for hounds. The first morning you take out the young entry, go straight to a covert where you are certain there is a litter, and if you know of one in a small spinney that is not a regular draw in the season, it is the very thing you want. You must use every means in your power to catch a cub, and do whatever you think most likely to attain that end. Do not sicken the young hounds by giving them a long morning to start with, but take them home directly they have killed a fox. If you have plenty of country, they would be all the better to be hunted every other day, instead of a long hard day twice a week. You must remember that if you kill a fox in a small covert, you cannot expect to find a really wild one there for at least two months afterwards. Therefore, in your anxiety to get hold of a cub in October, do not forget your future sport in November. I know that many well-known authorities will not agree with me ; but I consider that you ought never to kill a fox in any except very large and strong coverts. Those places which command your best country ought to be treated with the very greatest care. I would never stop cubs from going away, but would always rather trust to catching one in the open. If there is a drain not far away which your earth-stopper knows they have been using during the summer, it is a good plan to have it unstopped, and then you will be pretty certain of running one to ground, when, by the aid of a terrier or a spade,



A MADELEY ROAD MEET

*Photo by E. Harrison & Son, Newcastle.*

you will be able to accomplish your object. Of course, with large woodlands well stocked with foxes, you will have no need to resort to any of these devices, and may kill them whenever you get the chance. It is better to visit every litter twice before the regular season commences, and do not scruple to exact heavy toll if there are plenty of them; but if you find only old foxes, leave at once, and do not go there again until November. When foxes are too plentiful in a certain district, and you wish to reduce their numbers, cub-hunting is the time to do it, as later on you will find it impossible. Kill all the smallest foxes first, and those that look like vixens. You only want one vixen in every covert, but after the 1st of January you should be careful to see she is spared. All your best runs will come from dog foxes, and if you can keep one vixen in a covert she is certain to have plenty of visitors of the other sex. In order to have the best sport, there ought to be one vixen in the country to every seven dogs, as in that case the males wander about to different coverts, and will consequently give you good runs. In my opinion, one of the chief causes of short-running foxes is a preponderance of females over males. The white tag at the end of the brush is no guarantee of sex, and of course it is not easy to distinguish one from the other; but if you allow all the biggest cubs to go away unmolested, and hunt the small ones that stop to the last, you will not be far wrong. The instinct of the dog fox teaches him to go away at the sound of hounds, whilst that of the vixen bids her stay at home. You may occasionally have some good gallops in cub-hunting, and of course that is what your field will desire; but you must not study either your own inclinations or theirs. Your duty is, first of all, to make the pack, and then to kill all the worst or weakest foxes. If, in pursuance of these duties, a good run does fall to your lot, you will not enjoy it the less because it was unexpected."

Before concluding this imperfect record of the North Stafford Hunt and its achievements in the past, the writer may possibly be expected to say a word about its prospects for the future. Of course, we all have to bear in mind the old adage, "Never prophesy unless you know;" but we trust we shall not be held to contravene that counsel of prudence, if we say that everything appears to us to point to a long continuance of the success which has attended the North Stafford pack for so many years of its past history.

No Hunt can flourish without general and hearty support from all classes, more particularly from the owners and occupiers of land in the district hunted, and this support is never so ungrudgingly given as when you find at the head of affairs, not only a thoroughly popular Master, but a hard-working Hunt Committee, who fully represent the different classes interested, and an efficient secretary or secretaries. In the case of the

North Stafford Hunt, these conditions are admirably fulfilled at the present time, and the connection between the present Master and the Hunt seems likely to continue for many years to come;[*] that it will so continue is beyond all doubt the sincere wish of the members of the Hunt. Then, how few packs have the same advantages with regard to kennels and stables and the Hunt establishment right in the centre of the district, in an ideal situation, and entirely free of cost to the Hunt, with a splendid pack of hounds always in tip-top condition, an efficient body of Hunt servants, well mounted and equipped, and the whole thing done in first-class style! A word ought to be said, too, with reference to the very admirable spirit of the members of the Hunt and the landowners and farmers of the district. A more cordial and loyal body it would be difficult to find in any country, and we are sure the Master would be the first to acknowledge the obligation he is under to them and the Hunt Committee. Nor is it to be counted as a drawback that the fields are manageable as to size and numbers, to say nothing of the matter of discipline.

Most hunting men know what a nuisance it is to have four or five hundred horsemen out at a popular meet; from this crowd the North Stafford Hunt is happily free. Even at the most popular meets on the Woore and Doddington side, the fields never approach within measurable distance of the numbers just named, and it is not often that the Master has any real difficulty in controlling the ardent spirits who are over-anxious for a start. The wire grievance is certainly a drawback which the North Stafford Hunt, like many others, suffers from more or less acutely; but it is hoped that the steps taken by the committee and the Master have reduced, and will reduce, this inconvenience and danger to a minimum.

The inherent capabilities of the North Stafford country for showing sport should not be lost sight of in this connection. We have already, in an early chapter, referred to several points in its favour, and we should like again to say a good word for our native county, in which the present writer has spent nearly the whole of a fairly long life. It is the fashion to speak of North Staffordshire as a poor hunting country, and by those who think that hunting can only be enjoyed in a flying country like Leicestershire, it may be so classed; but we venture to think that those who decry North Staffordshire as a hunting country do it an injustice, and that their prejudice most likely arises from a want of thorough knowledge of the district. It is true that enclosures are generally small, that portions of the country are hilly, and that a ditch-and-bank country is not the most enjoyable for a man to ride over who has not been accustomed to it; but *Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum*, we cannot all set up a big stud of thoroughbreds, and betake ourselves to Melton or Market Harborough, and the sportsman who is willing to make the most of the advantages within his reach may enjoy some capital sport, and will find hounds now and then quite fast enough for him and his mount, even in North Staffordshire.

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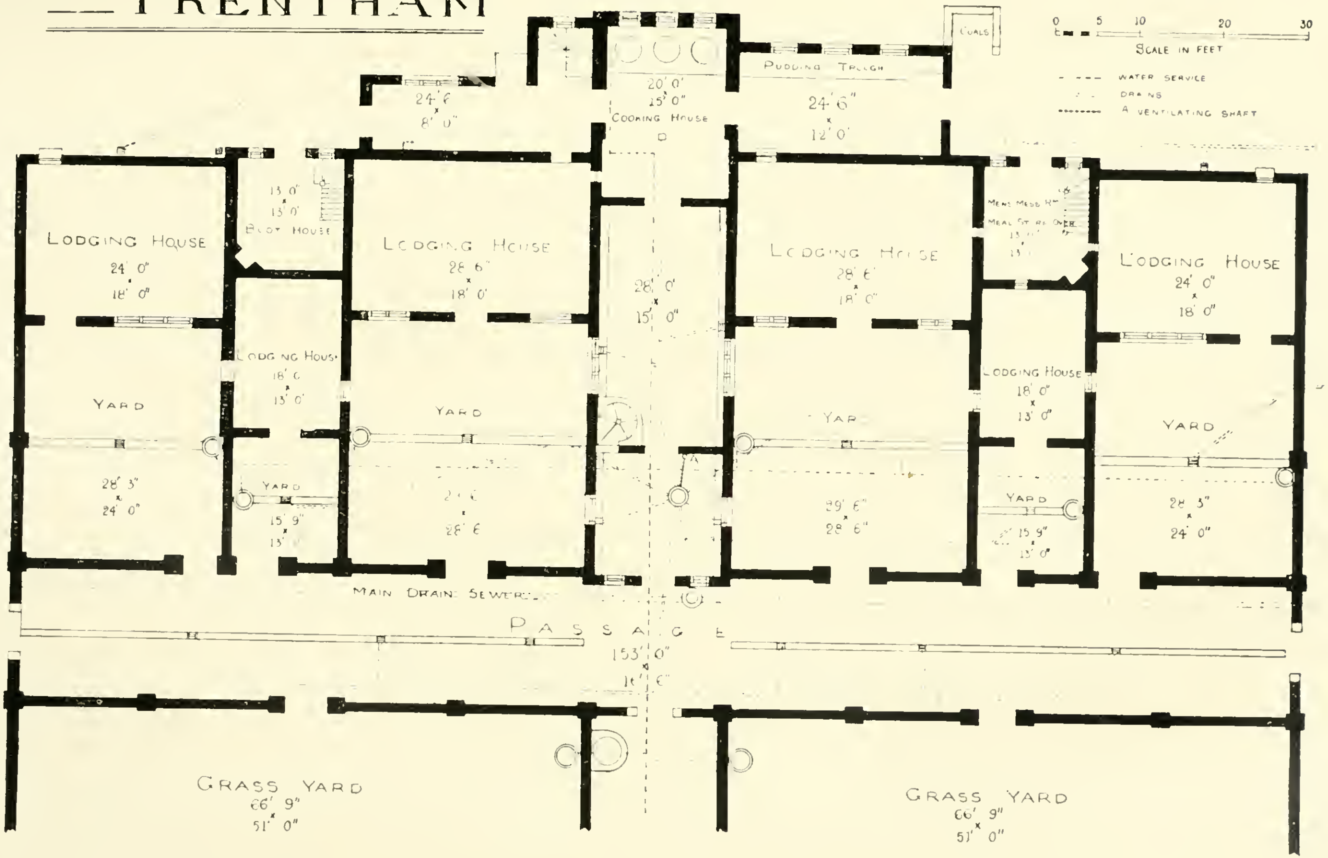
[*] Since this was written we regret to find that there is likely to be a change next season in the Mastership of the North Stafford Hunt. We are sure that this regret will be shared generally by the members of the Hunt.

Then what a joy it is to revel in a grass country like ours, where ploughed fields are the rare exception and turf the general rule! A fine scenting country it is, too, for the most part, and wild foxes abound through the length and breadth of it, that disdain to dodge and twist, or to make for the nearest drain or rabbit-hole, but set their mask for some distant point and determine to do or die. No man need wish for a finer gallop than we have often had from Draycot right into the heart of the Meynell country, or from the Woore coverts right into the centre of the Cheshire Hunt. What country can show finer woodlands than the North Stafford? better nurseries for foxes, better schools for young hounds?

The present writer must risk being set down as a *laudator temporis acti* and an enthusiast, when he dwells upon the past glories of the Hunt, and looks forward hopefully to its future ; but no one will blame him, we trust, for having so heartily enjoyed the noble sport in the past, under the pleasant auspices of the North Stafford management, nor for wishing with all his heart, for the sake of younger men than himself, that the dear old Hunt may go on and prosper for many happy years yet to come.

# THE KENNELS — TRENTHAM

## PLAN


0 5 10 20 30
SCALE IN FEET
WATER SERVICE
DRAINS
A VENTILATING SHAFT
COALS
PUDDING TROUGH
24' 6" x 12' 0'
20' 0' x 15' 0"
COOKING HOUSE
24' 6 x 8' 0"
LODGING HOUSE
24' 0" x 18' 0"
13' 0" x 13' 0'
BOILER HOUSE
LODGING HOUSE
28' 6" x 18' 0'
28' 0' x 15' 0"
LODGING HOUSE
28' 6' x 18' 0"
MENS MESS RM
MEAL STORE OVER
13' 0" x 13'
LODGING HOUSE
24' 0" x 18' 0"
LODGING HOUSE
18' 0 x 13' 0'
YARD
28' 3" x 24' 0"
YARD
15' 9" x 13'
YARD
24' 6 x 28' 6
YARD
29' 6" x 28' 6"
LODGING HOUSE
18' 0" x 13' 0"
YARD
15' 9" x 13' 0"
YARD
28' 3" x 24' 0"
MAIN DRAIN SEWER
PASSAGE
153' 0" x 11' 6"
GRASS YARD
66' 9" x 51' 0"
GRASS YARD
66' 9" x 51' 0"

# APPENDIX 1.

## MASTERS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Mr. C. Wicksted | 1825 to 1836 |
| Interregnum | 1836 ,, 1842 |
| Mr. W. Davenport | 1842 ,, 1869 |
| The Earl of Shrewsbury<br>Captain Nugent | 1869 ,, 1871 |
| Captain Nugent | 1871 ,, 1874 |
| Marquis of Stafford (Duke of Sutherland) | 1874 ,, 1902 |

## HONORARY SECRETARIES.

| | |
|---|---|
| Colonel Coote Buller | 1865 to 1868 |
| Mr. Egerton Harding | 1868 ,, 1870 |
| Rev. C. H. Mainwaring | 1870 ,, 1874 |
| Mr. W. Fitzherbert-Brockholes | 1874 ,, 1876 |
| Mr. J. H. Edwards-Heathcote | 1876 ,, 1885 |
| Mr. W. Fitzherbert-Brockholes | 1885 ,, 1887 |
| Mr. R. Boote and Mr. A. Simpson | 1887 ,, 1891 |
| Mr. R. N. Wood and Mr. Simpson | 1891 ,, 1899 |
| Major Stamer and Mr. Simpson | 1899 ,, 1902 |

## HUNTSMEN.

| | |
|---|---|
| William Wells | 1825 to 1836 |
| Interregnum | 1836 ,, 1842 |
| Mr. Davenport (the Master | 1842 ,, 1846 |
| Joseph Maiden | 1846 ,, 1863 |
| Thomas Atkinson | 1863 ,, 1869 |
| Thomas Clarke | 1869 ,, 1870 |
| T. Jennings | 1870 ,, 1871 |
| Stephen Dickins | 1871 ,, 1896 |
| William Boxall | 1896 ,, 1902 |

## FIRST WHIPPERS-IN.

| | |
|---|---|
| Thomas Ridley | 1874 to 1877 |
| William Boxall | 1877 ,, 1896 |
| Stephen Dickins, junr. | 1896 ,, 1897 |
| E. Parker | 1897 ,, 1901 |
| A. Sheppard | 1901 ,, 1902 |

## SECOND WHIPPERS-IN.

| | |
|---|---|
| J. Abel | 1874 to 1879 |
| George Goddard | 1879 ,, 1884 |
| J. Chandler | 1884 ,, 1888 |
| Richard Jephson | 1888 ,, 1889 |
| George Beames | 1889 ,, 1893 |
| Stephen Dickins, junr. | 1893 ,, 1896 |
| E. Jones | 1896 ,, 1902 |

Note.—There is no record extant of the changes in the appointment of first and second whippers-in prior to 1874.

# APPENDIX II.

## LIST OF HOUNDS.

### FROM 1887 TO 1901 INCLUSIVE.

### 1887.

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Dulcet<br>Daisy | Bramham Gambler | Dimple, 1877 |
| Sally<br>Stately | Bramham Sultan | Daffodil, 1877 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Gladsome<br>Gaiety | Valiant, 1878 | Gadfly, 1873 |
| Hardy | Brocklesby Alfred | Hasty, 1876 |
| Marksman | Gallant, 1879 | Mindful, 1876 |
| Saunterer<br>Sprightly | Milton Statesman | Music, 1876 |
| Vengeance<br>Vivid | Valiant, 1878 | Handmaid, 1876 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Beauty | Bondsman, 1880 | Giddy, 1878 |
| Driver | President, 1876 | Daffodil, 1877 |
| Duster<br>Diligent | Gallant, 1879 | Dimple, 1877 |
| Flourish | Merlin, 1880 | Fatima, 1880 |
| Harriet | Atherstone Solon | Handmaid, 1876 |
| Newsman | Oakley Newsman, 1883 | Hasty, 1876 |
| Remus | Gallant, 1879 | Rival, 1876 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Alpha<br>Amity<br>Affable | Bondsman, 1880 | Adelaide, 1877 |
| Amulet<br>Adeline | Primate, 1877 | Active, 1880 |
| Bender<br>Bauble | Bondsman, 1880 | Daffodil, 1877 |
| Chimer | Comus, 1880 | Melody, 1880 |
| Governor | Goblin, 1880 | Magic, 1880 |
| Gainer<br>General<br>Gaylass | Goblin, 1880 | Actress, 1880 |
| Madcap | Manful, 1880 | Guilty, 1881 |
| Ranger | Mr. Chaplin's Rallywood | Charity, 1880 |
| Ransome<br>Rashness | Brocklesby Roman | Baneful, 1880 |
| Speedy<br>Symphony | Merlin, 1880 | Sally, 1881 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Convict<br>Charmer | Comus, 1880 | Daffodil, 1877 |
| Dexter<br>Duncan<br>Dewdrop | Brocklesby Roman | Dulcet, 1881 |
| Factor<br>Flasher | Manful, 1880 | Festive, 1880 |
| Favourite | Gallant, 1879 | Fanciful, 1882 |
| Gameboy | Manful, 1880 | Gesture, 1880 |
| Glider | Gallant, 1879 | Dimple, 1877 |
| Harper | Meynell Gallant | Hasty, 1876 |
| Modish | Manful, 1880 | Garland, 1881 |
| Sparkle<br>Sportly | Bondsman, 1880 | Starlight, 1881 |
| Trojan | Brocklesby Tipster | Willing, 1879 |
| Vigilant<br>Virtue | Vanguard, 1880 | Sprightly, 1882 |
| Walton<br>Wellington | Warrior, 1882 | Passion, 1881 |

### Two Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Castor | Racer, 1881 | Charity, 1880 |
| Comely | | |
| Grappler | Newsman, 1883 | Guilty, 1881 |
| Grumbler | | |
| Glorious | | |
| Graceful | | |
| Harmony | Harbinger, 1882 | Garland, 1881 |
| Hamblin | | |
| Hercules | | |
| Loyalty | North Cheshire Linkboy | Harriet, 1883 |
| Legacy | | |
| Laundress | | |
| Notable | Newsman, 1883 | Faithful, 1880 |
| Nabob | | |
| Nosegay | | |
| Norah | | |
| Saffron | Belvoir Stainless | Vivid, 1882 |
| Spinster | | |
| Worthy | Warrior, 1882 | Magic, 1880 |
| Welcome | | |
| Witchcraft | | |

### One Year.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Bangor | Newsman, 1883 | Bounty, 1881 |
| Brutus | | |
| Blossom | | |
| Careful | Comus, 1880 | Rashness, 1882 |
| Fatal | Newsman, 1883 | Flourish, 1881 |
| Ferryman | | |
| Growler | Atherstone Galopin | Dahlia, 1883 |
| Glancer | | |
| Grateful | | |
| Gladness | | |
| Galliard | Comus, 1880 | Gaily, 1883 |
| Grasper | | |
| Guardsman | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1883 |
| Gaffer | | |
| Gentle | | |
| Goodness | | |
| Noble | Newsman, 1883 | Bluebell, 1881 |
| Racket | Ranger, 1884 | Passion, 1883 |
| Singwell | Bondsman, 1880 | Spiteful, 1883 |
| Settler | Newsman, 1883 | Stateley, 1883 |
| Tickler | Oakley Twister | Harriet, 1883 |
| Tomboy | | |
| Termagant | | |

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Variable<br>Verity | Lord Lonsdale's Gaylad | Vivid, 1883 |
| Wayward<br>Warbler<br>Waspish<br>Whimsey | Oakley Wonder | Affable, 1884 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1887.

| | |
|---|---|
| 7 years old | 2 couples. |
| 6 ,, | 4 ,, |
| 5 ,, | 4 ,, |
| 4 ,, | 9 ,, |
| 3 ,, | 9½ ,, |
| 2 ,, | 10½ ,, |
| 1 ,, | 14½ ,, |
| Total | 53½ ,, |
| Old hounds | 39 ,, |
| Young hounds | 14½ ,, |

---

## 1888.

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Gladsome<br>Gaiety | Valiant, 1878 | Gadfly, 1873 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Beauty | Bondsman, 1880 | Giddy, 1878 |
| Diligent | Gallant, 1879 | Dimple, 1877 |
| Newsman | Oakley Newsman, 1883 | Hasty, 1876 |
| Remus | Gallant, 1879 | Rival, 1876 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Amity<br>Affable | Bondsman, 1880 | Adelaide, 1877 |
| Amulet<br>Adeline | Primate, 1877 | Active, 1880 |
| Bender<br>Bauble | Bondsman, 1880 | Daffodil, 1877 |
| Chimer | Comus, 1880 | Melody, 1880 |
| Governor | Goblin, 1880 | Magic, 1880 |
| Gainer<br>General<br>Gaylass | Goblin, 1880 | Actress, 1880 |
| Madcap | Manful, 1880 | Guilty, 1881 |
| Ranger | Mr. Chaplin's Rallywood | Charity, 1880 |
| Ransome<br>Rashness | Brocklesby Roman | Baneful, 1880 |
| Speedy<br>Symphony | Merlin, 1880 | Sally, 1881 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Convict<br>Charmer | Comus, 1880 | Daffodil, 1877 |
| Dexter<br>Duncan<br>Dewdrop | Brocklesby Roman | Dulcet, 1881 |
| Flasher | Manful, 1880 | Festive, 1880 |
| Favourite | Gallant, 1879 | Fanciful, 1882 |
| Gameboy | Manful, 1880 | Gesture, 1880 |
| Glider | Gallant, 1879 | Dimple, 1877 |
| Harper | Meynell Gallant | Hasty, 1876 |
| Modish | Manful, 1880 | Garland, 1881 |
| Sparkle | Bondsman, 1880 | Starlight, 1881 |
| Trojan | Brocklesby Tipster | Willing, 1879 |
| Vigilant<br>Virtue | Vanguard, 1880 | Sprightly, 1882 |
| Walton | Warrior, 1882 | Passion, 1881 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Comely | Racer, 1881 | Charity, 1880 |
| Grumbler<br>Glorious<br>Graceful | Newsman, 1883 | Guilty, 1881 |
| Harmony<br>Hamblin | Harbinger, 1882 | Garland, 1881 |
| Legacy<br>Laundress | North Cheshire Linkboy | Harriet, 1883 |
| Notable<br>Nabob<br>Nosegay<br>Norah | Newsman, 1883 | Faithful, 1880 |
| Saffron<br>Spinster | Belvoir Stainless | Vivid, 1882 |
| Worthy<br>Witchcraft | Warrior, 1882 | Magic, 1880 |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Brutus | Newsman, 1883 | Bounty, 1881 |
| Careful | Comus, 1880 | Rashness, 1882 |
| Fatal | Newsman, 1883 | Flourish, 1881 |
| Growler<br>Glancer<br>Grateful<br>Gladness | Atherstone Galopin | Dahlia, 1883 |
| Guardsman<br>Gaffer<br>Gentle<br>Goodness | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1883 |
| Noble | Newsman, 1883 | Bluebell, 1881 |
| Racket | Ranger, 1884 | Passion, 1883 |
| Singwell | Bondsman, 1880 | Spiteful, 1883 |
| Tickler<br>Termagant | Oakley Twister | Harriet, 1883 |
| Variable<br>Verity | Lord Lonsdale's Gaylad | Vivid, 1883 |
| Wayward<br>Warbler<br>Waspish<br>Whimsey | Oakley Wonder | Affable, 1884 |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Angry | Trojan, 1884 | Amulet, 1883 |
| Bachelor<br>Bowler<br>Boniface<br>Bellmaid | Trojan, 1884 | Beauty, 1882 |
| Dreadnought<br>Damper<br>Doubtful | Trojan, 1884 | Diligent, 1882 |
| Factious | Duster, 1882 | Fanciful, 1882 |
| Forester | Newsman, 1883 | Favourite, 1884 |
| Nimrod<br>Narrative<br>Novelty | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1881 |
| Shrewdness | Cheshire Linkboy | Stately, 1881 |
| Skilful | Saffron, 1885 | Spangle, 1884 |
| Tartar<br>Trimmer<br>Tempest | Trojan, 1884 | Sportly, 1884 |
| Victory | Vanguard, 1880 | Symphony, 1883 |
| Wasteful | Cheshire Warlock | Harriet, 1883 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1888.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 years old | 1 | couples. |
| 6 ,, | 2 | ,, |
| 5 ,, | 8½ | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 8 | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 8 | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 11 | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 10 | ,, |
| Total | 48½ | ,, |
| Old hounds | 38½ | ,, |
| Young hounds | 10 | ,, |

## 1889.

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Diligent | Gallant, 1879 | Dimple, 1877 |

### Six Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Amity<br>Affable | Bondsman, 1880 | Adelaide, 1877 |
| Bender | Bondsman, 1880 | Daffodil, 1877 |
| Gainer<br>General | Goblin, 1880 | Actress, 1880 |
| Ranger | Mr. Chaplin's Rallywood | Charity, 1880 |
| Rashness | Brocklesby Roman | Baneful, 1880 |
| Speedy | Merlin, 1880 | Sally, 1881 |

### Five Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Duncan<br>Dewdrop | Brocklesby Roman | Dulcet, 1881 |
| Flasher | Manful, 1880 | Festive, 1880 |
| Favourite | Gallant, 1879 | Fanciful, 1882 |
| Gameboy | Manful, 1880 | Gesture, 1880 |
| Glider | Gallant, 1879 | Dimple, 1877 |
| Harper | Meynell Gallant | Hasty, 1876 |
| Sparkle | Bondsman, 1880 | Starlight, 1881 |
| Trojan | Brocklesby Tipster | Willing, 1879 |
| Virtue | Vanguard, 1880 | Sprightly, 1882 |
| Walton | Warrior, 1882 | Passion, 1881 |

### Four Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Comely | Racer, 1881 | Charity, 1880 |
| Grumbler<br>Glorious<br>Graceful | Newsman, 1883 | Guilty, 1881 |
| Harmony<br>Hamblin | Harbinger, 1882 | Garland, 1881 |
| Legacy<br>Laundress | North Cheshire Linkboy | Harriet, 1883 |
| Notable<br>Nabob<br>Nosegay<br>Norah | Newsman, 1883 | Faithful, 1880 |
| Spinster | Belvoir Stainless | Vivid, 1882 |
| Worthy | Warrior, 1882 | Magic, 1880 |

## THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Brutus | Newsman, 1883 | Bounty, 1881 |
| Fatal | Newsman, 1883 | Flourish, 1881 |
| Growler | Atherstone Galopin | Dahlia, 1883 |
| Glancer | | |
| Grateful | | |
| Gladness | | |
| Guardsman | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1883 |
| Gaffer | | |
| Gentle | | |
| Goodness | | |
| Noble | Newsman, 1883 | Bluebell, 1881 |
| Racket | Ranger, 1884 | Passion, 1883 |
| Singwell | Bondsman, 1880 | Spiteful, 1883 |
| Tickler | Oakley Twister | Harriet, 1883 |
| Termagant | | |
| Variable | Lord Lonsdale's Gaylad | Vivid, 1883 |
| Verity | | |
| Wayward | Oakley Wonder | Affable, 1884 |
| Waspish | | |
| Whimsey | | |

## TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Angry | Trojan, 1884 | Amulet, 1883 |
| Bachelor | Trojan, 1884 | Beauty, 1882 |
| Boniface | | |
| Bellmaid | | |
| Dreadnought | Trojan, 1884 | Diligent, 1882 |
| Damper | | |
| Doubtful | | |
| Factious | Duster, 1882 | Fanciful, 1882 |
| Forester | Newsman, 1883 | Favourite, 1884 |
| Nimrod | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1881 |
| Novelty | | |
| Shrewdness | Cheshire Linkboy | Stately, 1881 |
| Skilful | Saffron, 1885 | Spangle, 1884 |
| Tartar | Trojan, 1884 | Sportly, 1884 |
| Trimmer | | |
| Tempest | | |
| Victory | Vanguard, 1880 | Symphony, 1883 |
| Wasteful | Cheshire Warlock | Harriet, 1883 |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Audible | Worthy, 1885 | Adeline, 1882 |
| Chaunter<br>Conquest<br>Countess<br>Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Doriment<br>Darling | Meynell Doriment | Symphony, 1882 |
| Ganymede<br>Goldfinch<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |
| Lissome<br>Lively<br>Lawless<br>Lightsome | General, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Trumpeter<br>Tradesman | Trojan, 1884 | Actress, 1880 |
| Woldsman<br>Welfare | Worthy, 1885 | Affable, 1882 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1889.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 years old | $0\frac{1}{2}$ | couples. |
| 6 ,, | 4 | ,, |
| 5 ,, | $5\frac{1}{2}$ | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 7 | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 10 | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 9 | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 9 | ,, |
| Total | 45 | ,, |
| Old hounds | 36 | ,, |
| Young hounds | 9 | ,, |

## 1890.

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Dewdrop | Brocklesby Roman | Dulcet, 1881 |
| Flasher | Manful, 1880 | Festive, 1880 |
| Harper | Meynell Gallant | Hasty, 1876 |
| Sparkle | Bondsman, 1880 | Starlight, 1881 |
| Trojan | Brocklesby Tipster | Willing, 1879 |
| Virtue | Vanguard, 1880 | Sprightly, 1882 |
| Walton | Warrior, 1882 | Passion, 1881 |

### Five Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Grumbler<br>Glorious<br>Graceful | Newsman, 1883 | Guilty, 1881 |
| Hamblin | Harbinger, 1882 | Garland, 1881 |
| Laundress | North Cheshire Linkboy | Harriet, 1883 |
| Notable<br>Nosegay<br>Norah | Newsman, 1883 | Faithful, 1880 |
| Worthy | Warrior, 1882 | Magic, 1880 |

### Four Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Brutus | Newsman, 1883 | Bounty, 1881 |
| Fatal | Newsman, 1883 | Flourish, 1881 |
| Growler<br>Grateful<br>Gladness | Atherstone Galopin | Dahlia, 1883 |
| Guardsman<br>Gaffer<br>Gentle<br>Goodness | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1883 |
| Racket | Ranger, 1884 | Passion, 1883 |
| Singwell | Bondsman, 1880 | Spiteful, 1883 |
| Termagant | Oakley Twister | Harriet, 1883 |
| Variable<br>Verity | Lord Lonsdale's Gaylad | Vivid, 1883 |
| Wayward<br>Waspish<br>Whimsey | Oakley Wonder | Affable, 1884 |

### Three Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Bachelor<br>Bellmaid | Trojan, 1884 | Beauty, 1882 |
| Dreadnought<br>Damper<br>Doubtful | Trojan, 1884 | Diligent, 1882 |
| Factious | Duster, 1882 | Fanciful, 1882 |
| Forester | Newsman, 1883 | Favourite, 1884 |
| Novelty | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1881 |
| Shrewdness | Cheshire Linkboy | Stately, 1881 |
| Skilful | Saffron, 1885 | Spangle, 1884 |
| Tartar<br>Trimmer | Trojan, 1884 | Sportly, 1884 |
| Victory | Vanguard, 1880 | Symphony, 1883 |
| Wasteful | Cheshire Warlock | Harriet, 1883 |

### Two Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Audible | Worthy, 1885 | Adeline, 1882 |
| Countess<br>Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Doriment | Meynell Doriment | Symphony, 1882 |
| Ganymede<br>Goldfinch<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |
| Lissome<br>Lawless<br>Lightsome | General, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Trumpeter<br>Tradesman | Trojan, 1884 | Actress, 1880 |
| Woldsman<br>Welfare | Worthy, 1885 | Affable, 1882 |

### One Year.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Charon<br>Carver<br>Captious<br>Cautious<br>Comical<br>Courtesy | Atherstone Trueman | Comely |
| Carol<br>Courier | Belvoir Glancer | Careful |
| Dangerous<br>Docile | General, 1882 | Daisy |
| Freeman<br>Fatima | Meynell Denmark | Favourite |
| Guardian<br>Galliard | General, 1882 | Gladsome |
| Monarch | Belvoir Gameboy | Modish |
| Pealer<br>Prudence<br>Prettylass | Belvoir Pirate | Affable |
| Ranter<br>Rattler<br>Riot | Ranger, 1882 | Legacy |
| Rector<br>Ringwood<br>Reckless | Ranger, 1882 | Laundress |
| Scamper<br>Stranger<br>Science | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Singwell |
| Traveller<br>Traitor | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Termagant |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1890.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 years old | 3½ | couples. |
| 5 ,, | 4½ | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 8½ | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 7 | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 7 | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 14½ | ,, |
| Total | 45 | ,, |
| Old hounds | 30½ | ,, |
| Young hounds | 14½ | ,, |

### 1891.

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Grumbler<br>Glorious | Newsman, 1883 | Guilty, 1881 |
| Notable<br>Nosegay<br>Norah | Newsman, 1883 | Faithful, 1880 |
| Worthy | Warrior, 1882 | Magic, 1880 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Brutus | Newsman, 1883 | Bounty, 1881 |
| Fatal | Newsman, 1883 | Flourish, 1881 |
| Grateful<br>Gladness | Atherstone Galopin | Dahlia, 1883 |
| Guardsman<br>Gentle<br>Goodness | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1883 |
| Racket | Ranger, 1884 | Passion, 1883 |
| Singwell | Bondsman, 1880 | Spiteful, 1883 |
| Termagant | Oakley Twister | Harriet, 1883 |
| Verity | Lord Lonsdale's Gaylad | Vivid, 1883 |
| Wayward<br>Waspish<br>Whimsey | Oakley Wonder | Affable, 1884 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Bachelor<br>Bellmaid | Trojan, 1884 | Beauty, 1882 |
| Dreadnought<br>Damper<br>Doubtful | Trojan, 1884 | Diligent, 1882 |
| Forester | Newsman, 1883 | Favourite, 1884 |
| Novelty | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1881 |
| Shrewdness | Cheshire Linkboy | Stately, 1881 |
| Tartar<br>Trimmer | Trojan, 1884 | Sportly, 1884 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Audible | Worthy, 1885 | Adeline, 1882 |
| Countess<br>Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Doriment | Meynell Doriment | Symphony, 1882 |
| Ganymede<br>Goldfinch<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |
| Lissome<br>Lightsome | General, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Welfare | Worthy, 1885 | Affable, 1882 |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Carver<br>Captious<br>Cautious<br>Comical<br>Courtesy | Atherstone Trueman | Comely |
| Carol<br>Courier | Belvoir Glancer | Careful |
| Dangerous<br>Docile | General, 1882 | Daisy |
| Freeman<br>Fatima | Meynell Denmark | Favourite |
| Guardian<br>Galliard | General, 1882 | Gladsome |
| Monarch | Belvoir Gameboy | Modish |
| Pealer<br>Prudence<br>Prettylass | Belvoir Pirate | Affable |
| Ranter<br>Rattler<br>Riot | Ranger, 1882 | Legacy |

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Rector<br>Reckless | Ranger, 1882 | Laundress |
| Stranger<br>Science | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Singwell |
| Traveller<br>Traitor | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Termagant |

## One Year.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Accurate<br>Artifice<br>Agile | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Amity, 1884 |
| Baffler<br>Bluster<br>Bashful<br>Boundless<br>Bonny | Growler, 1886 | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Dasher | General, 1882 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Grasper<br>Guilesome<br>Garland | Gainer, 1882 | Whimsey, 1886 |
| Nicety<br>Nimble<br>Notice<br>Neatness<br>Nestor | Growler, 1886 | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Smoker<br>Sportly | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Verity, 1886 |
| Teaser<br>Tidings | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Termagant, 1886 |
| Warning<br>Whipster<br>Warfare<br>Wishful<br>Wrathful | Lord Portsmouth's Wonder | Grateful, 1886 |

## Number of Hounds, 1891.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 years old | 3½ | couples. |
| 5 ,, | 7½ | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 5 | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 5 | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 13 | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 13½ | ,, |
| Total | 46 | ,, |
| Old hounds | 33 | ,, |
| Young hounds | 13 | ,, |

## 1892.

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Nosegay | Newsman, 1883 | Faithful, 1880 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Fatal | Newsman, 1883 | Flourish, 1881 |
| Grateful<br>Gladness | Atherstone Galopin | Dahlia, 1883 |
| Guardsman<br>Gentle<br>Goodness | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1883 |
| Singwell | Bondsman, 1880 | Spiteful, 1883 |
| Termagant | Oakley Twister | Harriet, 1883 |
| Verity | Lord Lonsdale's Gaylad | Vivid, 1883 |
| Wayward<br>Whimsey | Oakley Wonder | Affable, 1884 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Bellmaid | Trojan, 1884 | Beauty, 1882 |
| Dreadnought<br>Doubtful | Trojan, 1884 | Diligent, 1882 |
| Forester | Newsman, 1883 | Favourite, 1884 |
| Novelty | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1881 |
| Shrewdness | Cheshire Linkboy | Stately, 1881 |
| Tartar | Trojan, 1884 | Sportly, 1884 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Audible | Worthy, 1885 | Adeline, 1882 |
| Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Doriment | Meynell Doriment | Symphony, 1882 |
| Ganymede<br>Goldfinch<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |
| Lissome<br>Lightsome | General, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Welfare | Worthy, 1885 | Affable, 1882 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Captious<br>Comical<br>Courtesy | Atherstone Trueman | Comely, 1885 |
| Carol<br>Courier | Belvoir Glancer | Careful, 1885 |
| Dangerous<br>Docile | General, 1882 | Daisy, 1881 |
| Freeman<br>Fatima | Meynell Denmark | Favourite, 1883 |
| Guardian | General, 1882 | Gladsome, 1881 |
| Monarch | Belvoir Gameboy | Modish, 1883 |
| Pealer<br>Prudence<br>Prettylass | Belvoir Pirate | Affable, 1884 |
| Ranter<br>Rattler<br>Riot | Ranger, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Rector<br>Reckless | Ranger, 1882 | Laundress, 1884 |
| Stranger<br>Science | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Singwell, 1886 |
| Traveller<br>Traitor | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Termagant, 1886 |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Accurate<br>Artifice<br>Agile | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Amity, 1884 |
| Baffler<br>Bluster<br>Bashful<br>Boundless<br>Bonny | Growler, 1886 | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Dasher | General, 1882 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Grasper<br>Guilesome<br>Garland | Gainer, 1882 | Whimsey, 1886 |
| Nicety<br>Nimble<br>Neatness<br>Nestor | Growler, 1886 | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Smoker | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Verity, 1886 |
| Teaser<br>Tidings | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Termagant, 1886 |
| Whipster<br>Warfare<br>Wishful<br>Wrathful | Lord Portsmouth's Wonder | Grateful, 1886 |

### One Year.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Convert | General, 1882 | Comical, 1890 |
| Grampian | Growler, 1886 | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Gainsbro'<br>Granby<br>Gaffer<br>Gossamer | General, 1882 | Variable, 1886 |
| Hamlet<br>Highlander<br>Harmless<br>Honesty | Bramham Hospodar | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Norman<br>Napier<br>Needwood | Ganymede, 1888 | Norah, 1885 |
| Primate<br>Pastime<br>Parasol | Belvoir Pirate | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Roman<br>Rummager<br>Royal<br>Rutland | Bramham Rambler | Grateful, 1886 |
| Voyager<br>Vandyke<br>Velvet<br>Violet<br>Varnish | Growler, 1886 | Virtue, 1884 |

### Number of Hounds, 1892.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 years old | 0½ | couples. |
| 6 ,, | 5½ | ,, |
| 5 ,, | 3½ | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 4½ | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 11½ | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 11½ | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 12½ | ,, |
| Total | 49½ | ,, |
| Old hounds | 37 | ,, |
| Young hounds | 12½ | ,, |

## 1893.

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Dreadnought<br>Doubtful | Trojan, 1884 | Diligent, 1882 |
| Forester | Newsman, 1883 | Favourite, 1884 |
| Novelty | Newsman, 1883 | Garland, 1881 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Audible | Worthy, 1885 | Adeline, 1882 |
| Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Ganymede<br>Goldfinch<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |
| Lissome<br>Lightsome | General, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Welfare | Worthy, 1885 | Affable, 1882 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Captious<br>Courtesy | Atherstone Trueman | Comely, 1885 |
| Carol | Belvoir Glancer | Careful, 1885 |
| Dangerous<br>Docile | General, 1882 | Daisy, 1881 |
| Freeman<br>Fatima | Meynell Denmark | Favourite, 1883 |
| Guardian | General, 1882 | Gladsome, 1881 |
| Monarch | Belvoir Gameboy | Modish, 1883 |
| Pealer<br>Prudence<br>Prettylass | Belvoir Pirate | Affable, 1884 |
| Rattler | Ranger, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Rector<br>Reckless | Ranger, 1882 | Laundress, 1884 |
| Science | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Singwell, 1886 |
| Traveller<br>Traitor | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Termagant, 1886 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Accurate | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Amity, 1884 |
| Agile | | |
| Baffler | Growler, 1886 | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Bluster | | |
| Bashful | | |
| Boundless | | |
| Bonny | | |
| Dasher | General, 1882 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Grasper | Gainer, 1882 | Whimsey, 1886 |
| Guilesome | | |
| Garland | | |
| Nicety | Growler, 1886 | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Nimble | | |
| Neatness | | |
| Teaser | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Termagant, 1886 |
| Tidings | | |
| Whipster | Lord Portsmouth's Wonder | Grateful, 1886 |
| Wrathful | | |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Convert | General, 1882 | Comical, 1890 |
| Grampian | Growler, 1886 | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Gainsbro' | General, 1882 | Variable, 1886 |
| Granby | | |
| Gaffer | | |
| Gossamer | | |
| Hamlet | Bramham Hospodar | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Highlander | | |
| Harmless | | |
| Norman | Ganymede, 1888 | Norah, 1885 |
| Napier | | |
| Needwood | | |
| Primate | Belvoir Pirate | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Pastime | | |
| Parasol | | |
| Roman | Bramham Rambler | Grateful, 1886 |
| Rummager | | |
| Royal | | |
| Rutland | | |
| Voyager | Growler, 1886 | Virtue, 1884 |
| Vandyke | | |
| Velvet | | |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Actor | Brocklesby Acrobat | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Cardinal<br>Chieftain<br>Columbine<br>Constance<br>Crocus | Meynell Colonel | Verity, 1886 |
| Challenger<br>Clinker<br>Chimer | Carol, 1889 | Artifice, 1890 |
| Friendly<br>Forcible | Brocklesby Feudal | Termagant, 1886 |
| Gambol<br>Gayly | Meynell Colonel | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Likely | Meynell Chieftain | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Midnight<br>Mayfly | Meynell Marvel | Grateful, 1886 |
| Prodigal<br>Prosper<br>Patience<br>Phrensy<br>Placid<br>Pliant | Doriment, 1888 | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Rhapsody | Ranter, 1889 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Sapphire<br>Shamrock<br>Symbol | Belvoir Pirate | Singwell, 1886 |
| Warden<br>Wisdom<br>Wakeful | Meynell Weathergauge | Welfare, 1886 |
| Welcome<br>Wildfire | Meynell Weathergauge | Shrewdness, 1887 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1893.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 years old | 2 | couples. |
| 5 ,, | 4 | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 9 | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 9 | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 11 | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 15½ | ,, |
| Total | 50½ | ,, |
| Old hounds | 35 | ,, |
| Young hounds | 15½ | ,, |

### 1894.

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Doubtful | Trojan, 1884 | Diligent, 1882 |
| Forester | Newsman, 1883 | Favourite, 1884 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Audible | Worthy, 1885 | Adeline, 1882 |
| Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Ganymede<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |
| Welfare | Worthy, 1885 | Affable, 1884 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Docile | General, 1882 | Daisy, 1881 |
| Freeman<br>Fatima | Meynell Denmark | Favourite, 1883 |
| Monarch | Belvoir Gameboy | Modish, 1883 |
| Prudence<br>Prettylass | Belvoir Pirate | Affable, 1884 |
| Rattler | Ranger, 1882 | Legacy, 1884 |
| Reckless | Ranger, 1882 | Laundress, 1884 |
| Science | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Singwell, 1886 |
| Traveller<br>Traitor | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Termagant, 1886 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Accurate<br>Agile | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Amity, 1884 |
| Bluster<br>Bashful<br>Boundless | Growler, 1886 | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Dasher | General, 1882 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Grasper<br>Garland | Gainer, 1882 | Whimsey, 1886 |
| Nicety<br>Nimble<br>Neatness | Growler, 1886 | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Teaser<br>Tidings | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Termagant, 1886 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Grampian | Growler, 1886 | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Gainsbro'<br>Granby<br>Gossamer | General, 1882 | Variable, 1886 |
| Hamlet<br>Highlander<br>Harmless | Bramham Hospodar | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Norman<br>Napier<br>Needwood | Ganymede, 1888 | Norah, 1885 |
| Primate<br>Pastime<br>Parasol | Belvoir Pirate | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Roman<br>Rummager<br>Royal<br>Rutland | Bramham Rambler | Grateful, 1886 |
| Voyager<br>Vandyke<br>Velvet | Growler, 1886 | Virtue, 1884 |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Actor | Brocklesby Acrobat | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Cardinal<br>Chieftain<br>Columbine<br>Constance<br>Crocus | Meynell Colonel | Verity, 1886 |
| Challenger<br>Clinker | Carol, 1889 | Artifice, 1890 |
| Friendly<br>Forcible | Brocklesby Feudal | Termagant, 1886 |
| Gayly | Meynell Colonel | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Mayfly | Meynell Chieftain | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Prodigal<br>Prosper<br>Patience<br>Phrensy<br>Placid<br>Pliant | Doriment, 1888 | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Rhapsody | Ranter, 1889 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Sapphire<br>Shamrock<br>Symbol | Belvoir Pirate | Singwell, 1886 |
| Warden<br>Wisdom<br>Wakeful | Meynell Weathergauge | Welfare, 1886 |
| Welcome<br>Wildfire | Meynell Weathergauge | Shrewdness, 1887 |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Artful | North Cheshire Guider | Audible, 1888 |
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Capital<br>Careless | Warwickshire Fifer | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Claimant<br>Combat | Forester, 1887 | Captious, 1890 |
| Damper<br>Dashwood<br>Dragon<br>Daphne<br>Destiny<br>Dauntless | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Ferryman | Forester, 1887 | Comical, 1890 |
| Forward | Warwickshire Fullerton | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Glider<br>Gravity<br>Glory | North Cheshire Gamester | Bashful, 1891 |
| Graceful | Guardsman | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Hardy<br>Hazard<br>Hector<br>Hopeful | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Heedful<br>Honesty<br>Harmony | Warwickshire Hermit | Neatness, 1891 |
| Nettler | Warwickshire Trampler | Novelty, 1887 |
| Trueman<br>Trimbush<br>Terrible | Carol, 1889 | Termagant, 1886 |
| Warbler<br>Workman<br>Wonderful | Warwickshire Wildboy | Nimble, 1891 |
| Warrior | Cheshire Gamester | Wrathful, 1891 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1894.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 years old | 1 | couples. |
| 6 " | 2½ | " |
| 5 " | 5½ | " |
| 4 " | 6½ | " |
| 3 " | 10 | " |
| 2 " | 13½ | " |
| 1 " | 16½ | " |
| Total | 55½ | " |
| Old hounds | 39 | " |
| Young hounds | 16½ | " |

## 1895.

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Audible | Worthy, 1885 | Adeline, 1882 |
| Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Ganymede<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |
| Welfare | Worthy, 1885 | Affable, 1884 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Freeman<br>Fatima | Meynell Denmark | Favourite, 1883 |
| Prudence | Belvoir Pirate | Affable, 1884 |
| Reckless | Ranger, 1882 | Laundress, 1884 |
| Traveller | Capt. the Hon. F. Johnstone's Granby | Termagant, 1886 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Accurate | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Amity, 1884 |
| Bluster<br>Boundless | Growler, 1886 | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Dasher | General, 1882 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Grasper<br>Garland | Gainer, 1882 | Whimsey, 1886 |
| Nicety<br>Nimble<br>Neatness | Growler, 1886 | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Teaser<br>Tidings | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Termagant, 1886 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Gainsbro'<br>Gossamer | General, 1882 | Variable, 1886 |
| Hamlet<br>Highlander<br>Harmless | Bramham Hospodar | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Norman<br>Napier<br>Needwood | Ganymede, 1888 | Norah, 1885 |
| Primate<br>Pastime | Belvoir Pirate | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Roman<br>Rummager<br>Royal<br>Rutland | Bramham Rambler | Grateful, 1886 |
| Voyager<br>Vandyke<br>Velvet | Growler, 1886 | Virtue, 1884 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Actor | Brocklesby Acrobat | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Cardinal<br>Chieftain<br>Columbine<br>Constance<br>Crocus | Meynell Colonel | Verity, 1886 |
| Clinker | Carol, 1889 | Artifice, 1890 |
| Friendly<br>Forcible | Brocklesby Fendal | Termagant, 1886 |
| Gaily | Meynell Colonel | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Mayfly | Meynell Chieftain | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Patience<br>Phrensy<br>Placid<br>Pliant | Doriment, 1888 | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Rhapsody | Ranter, 1889 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Sapphire<br>Shamrock<br>Symbol | Belvoir Pirate | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wisdom<br>Wakeful | Meynell Weathergauge | Welfare, 1886 |
| Welcome<br>Wildfire | Meynell Weathergauge | Shrewdness, 1887 |

## Two Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Artful | North Cheshire Guider | Audible, 1888 |
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Capital<br>Careless | Warwickshire Fifer | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Claimant<br>Combat | Forester, 1887 | Captious, 1890 |
| Damper<br>Dashwood<br>Dragon<br>Daphne<br>Destiny<br>Dauntless | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Ferryman | Forester, 1887 | Comical, 1890 |
| Forward | Warwickshire Fullerton | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Glider<br>Gravity<br>Glory | North Cheshire Gamester | Bashful, 1891 |
| Graceful | Guardsman | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Hardy<br>Hazard<br>Hector<br>Hopeful | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Heedful<br>Honesty<br>Harmony | Warwickshire Hermit | Neatness, 1891 |
| Trueman<br>Trimbush<br>Terrible | Carol, 1889 | Termagant, 1886 |
| Warbler<br>Workman<br>Wonderful | Warwickshire Wildboy | Nimble, 1891 |
| Warrior | Cheshire Gamester | Wrathful, 1891 |

## One Year.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Coton | Meynell Colonel | Their Lady |
| Flyer<br>Famous<br>Frolic<br>Festive | Quorn Falstaff | Novelty, 1889 |
| Gamesome<br>Gaylass | Ganymede | Goodness, 1886 |
| Pleasant<br>Playful<br>Positive<br>Priestess | Forester | Parasol, 1891 |

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Striver<br>Spiteful<br>Skilful<br>Sprightly<br>Stately | Highlander | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wildboy<br>Wilful<br>Watchful | Cheshire Weaver | Boundless, 1890 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1895.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 years old | 2½ | couples. |
| 6 ,, | 2½ | ,, |
| 5 ,, | 5½ | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 8½ | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 11½ | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 16 | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 9½ | ,, |
| Total | 56 | ,, |
| Old hounds | 46½ | ,, |
| Young hounds | 9½ | ,, |

### 1896.

### EIGHT YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Cheerful | Meynell Denmark | Comely, 1885 |
| Ganymede<br>Gloomy | Atherstone Regulus | Gaiety, 1881 |

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Fatima | Meynell Denmark | Favourite, 1883 |
| Prudence | Belvoir Pirate | Affable, 1884 |
| Reckless | Ranger, 1882 | Laundress, 1884 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Accurate | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Amity, 1884 |
| Bluster<br>Boundless | Growler, 1886 | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Dasher | General, 1882 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Garland | Gainer, 1882 | Whimsey, 1886 |
| Nicety<br>Nimble<br>Neatness | Growler, 1886 | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Tidings | Lord Fitzhardinge's Sportsman | Termagant, 1886 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Gainsboro'<br>Gossamer | General, 1882 | Variable, 1886 |
| Hamlet<br>Highlander<br>Harmless | Bramham Hospodar | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Norman<br>Napier<br>Needwood | Ganymede, 1888 | Norah, 1885 |
| Primate<br>Pastime | Belvoir Pirate | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Rummager<br>Royal<br>Rutland | Bramham Rambler | Grateful, 1886 |
| Vandyke | Growler, 1886 | Virtue, 1884 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Actor | Brocklesby Acrobat | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Constance<br>Crocus | Meynell Colonel | Verity, 1886 |
| Friendly<br>Forcible | Brocklesby Feudal | Termagant, 1886 |
| Gaily | Meynell Colonel | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Mayfly | Meynell Chieftain | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Patience<br>Phrensy<br>Placid<br>Pliant | Doriment, 1888 | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Rhapsody | Ranter, 1889 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Sapphire<br>Shamrock<br>Symbol | Belvoir Pirate | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wakeful | Meynell Weathergauge | Welfare, 1886 |
| Welcome<br>Wildfire | Meynell Weathergauge | Shrewdness, 1887 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Artful | North Cheshire Guider | Audible, 1888 |
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Capital | Warwickshire Fifer | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Careless | | |
| Claimant | Forester, 1887 | Captious, 1890 |
| Combat | | |
| Dashwood | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Dragon | | |
| Daphne | | |
| Destiny | | |
| Dauntless | | |
| Ferryman | Forester, 1887 | Comical, 1890 |
| Forward | Warwickshire Fullerton | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Glider | North Cheshire Gamester | Bashful, 1891 |
| Gravity | | |
| Glory | | |
| Hardy | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Hazard | | |
| Hector | | |
| Hopeful | | |
| Heedful | Warwickshire Hermit | Neatness, 1891 |
| Honesty | | |
| Harmony | | |
| Trueman | Carol, 1889 | Termagant, 1886 |
| Trimbush | | |
| Terrible | | |
| Warbler | Warwickshire Wildboy | Nimble, 1891 |
| Workman | | |
| Wonderful | | |
| Warrior | Cheshire Gamester | Wrathful, 1891 |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Coton | Meynell Colonel | Their Lady |
| Flyer | Quorn Falstaff | Novelty, 1889 |
| Famous | | |
| Frolic | | |
| Festive | | |
| Playful | Forester | Parasol, 1891 |
| Positive | | |
| Striver | Highlander | Singwell, 1886 |
| Spiteful | | |
| Skilful | | |
| Sprightly | | |
| Wilful | Cheshire Weaver | Boundless, 1890 |
| Watchful | | |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Adjutant<br>Agent | Meynell Colonel | Audible |
| Capable | Quorn Bowman | Cheerful |
| Darter<br>Dainty<br>Delicate | Oakley Daystar | Patience |
| Forager<br>Forlock<br>Furious<br>Fallacy | Forester | Science |
| Fleecer<br>Fervent | Forester | Parasol |
| Giddy | Ganymede | Agile |
| Noble<br>Narrative<br>Novice<br>Negative<br>Needful<br>Nightwatch | Gainsboro' | Nimble |
| Passion<br>Peaceful<br>Probity | Quorn Spartan | Prudence |
| Ruler<br>Rustic<br>Redcap | Roman | Phrensy |
| Rhymer<br>Rarity<br>Rivet | Roman | Pliant |
| Rival | Bramham Rupert | Welfare |
| Stoutness<br>Surety | Forester | Symbol |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1896.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8 years old | 1½ | couples. |
| 7 ” | 1½ | ” |
| 6 ” | 4½ | ” |
| 5 ” | 7 | ” |
| 4 ” | 9 | ” |
| 3 ” | 15 | ” |
| 2 ” | 6½ | ” |
| 1 ” | 15½ | ” |
| Total | 60½ | ” |
| Old hounds | 45 | ” |
| Young hounds | 15½ | ” |

## 1897.

### Nine Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Ganymede ............. | Atherstone Regulus ......... | Gaiety, 1881 |

### Eight Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Prudence ............... | Belvoir Pirate .................. | Affable, 1884 |

### Seven Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Bluster<br>Boundless ............. | Growler, 1886................. | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Nicety<br>Neatness ............... | Growler, 1886................. | Nosegay, 1887 |

### Six Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Gainsboro' ............... | General, 1882.................. | Variable, 1886 |
| Hamlet<br>Highlander<br>Harmless ............ | Bramham Hospodar ......... | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Napier<br>Needwood ............ | Ganymede, 1888.............. | Norah, 1885 |
| Primate<br>Pastime ............... | Belvoir Pirate................. | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Royal<br>Rutland................. | Bramham Rambler ......... | Grateful, 1886 |
| Vandyke .................. | Growler, 1886................. | Virtue, 1884 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Actor | Brocklesby Acrobat | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Constance<br>Crocus | Meynell Colonel | Verity, 1886 |
| Friendly<br>Forcible | Brocklesby Feudal | Termagant, 1886 |
| Gaily | Meynell Colonel | Goldfinch, 1888 |
| Patience<br>Phrensy<br>Placid | Doriment, 1888 | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Rhapsody | Ranter, 1889 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Shamrock<br>Symbol | Belvoir Pirate | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wakeful | Meynell Weathergauge | Welfare, 1886 |
| Welcome | Meynell Weathergauge | Shrewdness, 1887 |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Artful | North Cheshire Guider | Audible, 1888 |
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Capital<br>Careless | Warwickshire Fifer | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Claimant<br>Combat | Forester, 1887 | Captious, 1890 |
| Dashwood<br>Dragon<br>Destiny | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Forward | Warwickshire Fullerton | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Gravity<br>Glory | North Cheshire Gamester | Bashful, 1891 |
| Hardy<br>Hazard<br>Hector<br>Hopeful | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Honesty<br>Harmony | Warwickshire Hermit | Neatness, 1891 |
| Trueman<br>Terrible | Carol, 1889 | Termagant, 1886 |
| Warbler<br>Workman<br>Wonderful | Warwickshire Wildboy | Nimble, 1891 |
| Warrior | Cheshire Gamester | Wrathful, 1891 |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Coton | Meynell Colonel | Their Lady |
| Flyer<br>Famous<br>Frolic<br>Festive | Quorn Falstaff | Novelty, 1889 |
| Spiteful<br>Skilful<br>Spritely | Highlander, 1892 | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wilful<br>Watchful | Cheshire Weaver | Boundless, 1890 |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Adjutant<br>Agent | Meynell Colonel | Audible, 1888 |
| Capable | Quorn Bowman | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Dainty | Oakley Daystar | Patience, 1892 |
| Forager<br>Forlock<br>Furious<br>Fallacy | Forester, 1887 | Science, 1886 |
| Fleecer<br>Fervent | Forester, 1887 | Parasol, 1892 |
| Giddy | Ganymede, 1888 | Agile |
| Noble<br>Narrative<br>Novice<br>Negative<br>Needful | Gainsboro', 1892 | Nimble, 1891 |
| Passion<br>Peaceful<br>Probity | Quorn Spartan | Prudence, 1890 |
| Ruler<br>Redcap | Roman, 1892 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Rhymer<br>Rarity<br>Rivet | Roman, 1892 | Pliant, 1893 |
| Stoutness<br>Surety | Forester, 1887 | Symbol, 1892 |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Alderman | Brocklesby Acrobat | Wonderful, 1894 |
| Albion | | |
| Admiral | | |
| Actress | | |
| Alma | | |
| Active | | |
| Chamberlain | Quorn Spartan | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Chanter | | |
| Charmer | | |
| Charity | | |
| Crafty | Capital, 1893 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Candid | | |
| Clara | | |
| Dreamer | Dashwood, 1893 | Constance, 1892 |
| Dryden | | |
| Druid | | |
| Dexter | | |
| Damper | | |
| Fairplay | Ganymede, 1888 | Friendly, 1892 |
| Falstaff | | |
| Fancy | | |
| Fashion | | |
| Gaylass | Ganymede, 1888 | Patience, 1893 |
| Glancer | Warbler, 1894 | Garland, 1890 |
| Handsome | Ganymede, 1888 | Honesty, 1893 |
| Herbalist | Hamlet, 1891 | Symbol, 1892 |
| Pansy | Warbler, 1894 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Paradise | | |
| Wonder | Ganymede, 1888 | Wakeful, 1892 |
| Willing | | |
| Wanton | | |
| Waspish | | |
| Woodbine | | |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1897.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 9 years old | 0½ | couples. |
| 8 „ | 0½ | „ |
| 7 „ | 2 | „ |
| 6 „ | 5½ | „ |
| 5 „ | 7 | „ |
| 4 „ | 12 | „ |
| 3 „ | 5 | „ |
| 2 „ | 13 | „ |
| 1 „ | 16½ | „ |
| Total | 62 | „ |
| Old hounds | 45½ | „ |
| Young hounds | 16½ | „ |

## 1898.

### EIGHT YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Bluster<br>Boundless | Growler, 1886 | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Nicety | Growler, 1886 | Nosegay, 1887 |

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Gainsboro' | General, 1882 | Variable, 1886 |
| Hamlet<br>Harmless | Bramham Hospodar | Lightsome, 1888 |
| Napier | Ganymede, 1888 | Norah, 1885 |
| Rutland | Bramham Rambler | Grateful, 1886 |
| Vandyke | Growler, 1886 | Virtue, 1884 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Actor | Brocklesby Acrobat | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Constance<br>Crocus | Meynell Colonel | Verity, 1886 |
| Friendly<br>Forcible | Brocklesby Feudal | Termagant, 1886 |
| Patience<br>Phrensy<br>Placid | Doriment, 1888 | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Rhapsody | Ranter, 1889 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Symbol | Belvoir Pirate | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wakeful | Meynell Weathergauge | Welfare, 1886 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Artful | North Cheshire Guider | Audible, 1888 |
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Capital<br>Careless | Warwickshire Fifer | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Claimant | Forester, 1887 | Captious, 1890 |
| Dashwood<br>Dragon<br>Destiny | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Forward | Warwickshire Fullerton | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Gravity<br>Glory | North Cheshire Gamester | Bashful, 1891 |
| Hopeful | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Honesty | Warwickshire Hermit | Neatness, 1891 |
| Terrible | Carol, 1889 | Termagant, 1886 |
| Warbler | Warwickshire Wildboy | Nimble, 1891 |
| Workman | | |
| Wonderful | | |
| Warrior | Cheshire Gamester | Wrathful, 1891 |

## FOUR YEARS.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Coton | Meynell Colonel | Their Lady |
| Flyer | Quorn Falstaff | Novelty, 1889 |
| Famous | | |
| Frolic | | |
| Festive | | |
| Spiteful | Highlander, 1892 | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wilful | Cheshire Weaver | Boundless, 1890 |
| Watchful | | |

## THREE YEARS.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Adjutant | Meynell Colonel | Audible |
| Capable | Quorn Bowman | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Dainty | Oakley Daystar | Patience, 1892 |
| Forager | Forester, 1887 | Science, 1886 |
| Forelock | | |
| Furious | | |
| Fallacy | | |
| Fleecer | Forester, 1887 | Parasol, 1892 |
| Fervent | | |
| Giddy | Ganymede, 1888 | Agile |
| Noble | Gainsboro', 1892 | Nimble, 1891 |
| Narrative | | |
| Novice | | |
| Negative | | |
| Needful | | |
| Passion | Quorn Spartan | Prudence, 1890 |
| Peaceful | | |
| Probity | | |
| Ruler | Roman, 1892 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Redcap | | |
| Rhymer | Roman, 1892 | Pliant, 1893 |
| Rarity | | |
| Rivet | | |
| Stoutness | Forester, 1887 | Symbol, 1892 |
| Surety | | |

### TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Alderman<br>Albion<br>Admiral<br>Actress<br>Alma<br>Active | Brocklesby Acrobat | Wonderful, 1894 |
| Chamberlain<br>Chanter<br>Charmer<br>Charity | Quorn Spartan | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Crafty<br>Candid<br>Clara | Capital, 1893 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Dreamer<br>Dryden<br>Druid<br>Dexter<br>Damper | Dashwood, 1893 | Constance, 1892 |
| Fairplay<br>Falstaff<br>Fancy<br>Fashion | Ganymede, 1888 | Friendly, 1892 |
| Gaylass | Ganymede, 1888 | Patience, 1893 |
| Handsome | Ganymede, 1888 | Honesty, 1893 |
| Herbalist | Hamlet, 1891 | Symbol, 1892 |
| Paradise | Warbler, 1894 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Wonder<br>Willing<br>Wanton<br>Waspish<br>Woodbine | Ganymede, 1888 | Wakeful, 1892 |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Cloister<br>Comedy<br>Cora | Warbler, 1894 | Constance, 1892 |
| Denmark<br>Daffodil<br>Damsel | Gainsboro', 1892 | Destiny, 1893 |
| Graceful<br>Gesture<br>Gladys<br>Glowworm | Gainsboro', 1892 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Hasty | Ganymede, 1888 | Harmony, 1893 |
| Newsman<br>Needy | Warwickshire Nailer | Frolic, 1895 |
| Nightly | Forager, 1896 | Nightwatch, 1896 |
| Saracen | Ganymede, 1888 | Surety, 1895 |

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Tranquil<br>Transit<br>Timely | Warwickshire Tancred | Symbol, 1892 |
| Woodman<br>Wellington | Workman, 1894 | Gaily, 1892 |
| Worthy | Workman, 1894 | Welcome, 1892 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1898.

| | |
|---|---|
| 8 years old | 1½ couples. |
| 7 " | 3 " |
| 6 " | 5½ " |
| 5 " | 9 " |
| 4 " | 4 " |
| 3 " | 12½ " |
| 2 " | 15½ " |
| 1 " | 10½ " |
| Total | 61½ " |
| Old hounds | 51 " |
| Young hounds | 10½ " |

## 1899.

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Phrensy<br>Placid | Doriment, 1888 | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Rhapsody | Ranter, 1889 | Dewdrop, 1884 |
| Wakeful | Meynell Weathergauge | Welfare, 1886 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Capital | Warwickshire Fifer | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Claimant | Forester, 1887 | Captious, 1890 |
| Dashwood<br>Dragon | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Forward | Warwickshire Fullerton | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Hopeful | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Honesty | Warwickshire Hermit | Neatness, 1891 |
| Terrible | Carol, 1889 | Termagant, 1886 |
| Warbler<br>Wonderful | Warwickshire Wildboy | Nimble, 1891 |
| Warrior | Cheshire Gamester | Wrathful, 1891 |

### FIVE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Famous | Quorn Falstaff | Novelty, 1889 |
| Frolic | | |
| Festive | | |
| Spiteful | Highlander, 1892 | Singwell, 1886 |
| Wilful | Cheshire Weaver | Boundless, 1890 |
| Watchful | | |

### FOUR YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Adjutant | Meynell Colonel | Audible |
| Capable | Quorn Bowman | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Dainty | Oakley Daystar | Patience, 1892 |
| Forager | Forester, 1887 | Science, 1886 |
| Forelock | | |
| Furious | | |
| Fallacy | | |
| Fleecer | Forester, 1887 | Parasol, 1892 |
| Fervent | | |
| Giddy | Ganymede, 1888 | Agile |
| Noble | Gainsboro', 1892 | Nimble, 1891 |
| Narrative | | |
| Novice | | |
| Negative | | |
| Needful | | |
| Passion | Quorn Spartan | Prudence, 1890 |
| Peaceful | | |
| Probity | | |
| Ruler | Roman, 1892 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Redcap | | |
| Rhymer | Roman, 1892 | Pliant, 1893 |
| Rarity | | |
| Rivet | | |
| Stoutness | Forester, 1887 | Symbol, 1892 |
| Surety | | |

### THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Alderman | Brocklesby Acrobat | Wonderful, 1894 |
| Albion | | |
| Admiral | | |
| Actress | | |
| Alma | | |

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Chamberlain | Quorn Spartan | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Chanter | | |
| Charity | | |
| Crafty | Capital, 1893 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Candid | | |
| Clara | | |
| Dreamer | Dashwood, 1893 | Constance, 1892 |
| Dryden | | |
| Druid | | |
| Dexter | | |
| Damper | | |
| Fairplay | Ganymede, 1888 | Friendly, 1892 |
| Falstaff | | |
| Fancy | | |
| Fashion | | |
| Gaylass | Ganymede, 1888 | Patience, 1893 |
| Handsome | Ganymede, 1888 | Honesty, 1893 |
| Paradise | Warbler, 1894 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Wonder | Ganymede, 1888 | Wakeful, 1892 |
| Willing | | |
| Wanton | | |
| Waspish | | |
| Woodbine | | |

## TWO YEARS.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Cloister | Warbler, 1894 | Constance, 1892 |
| Comedy | | |
| Cora | | |
| Denmark | Gainsboro', 1892 | Destiny, 1893 |
| Daffodil | | |
| Damsel | | |
| Gesture | Gainsboro', 1892 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Gladys | | |
| Glowworm | | |
| Hasty | Ganymede, 1888 | Harmony, 1893 |
| Newsman | Warwickshire Nailer | Frolic, 1895 |
| Needy | | |
| Nightly | Forager, 1896 | Nightwatch, 1896 |
| Saracen | Ganymede, 1888 | Surety, 1895 |
| Tranquil | Warwickshire Tancred | Symbol, 1892 |
| Transit | | |
| Timely | | |
| Woodman | Workman, 1894 | Gaily, 1892 |
| Wellington | | |
| Worthy | Workman, 1894 | Welcome, 1892 |

### ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Agnes<br>Abbess | Albion, 1897 | Willing, 1897 |
| Anguish | Capital, 1893 | Artful, 1893 |
| Bashful | Warwickshire Warlock | Boundless, 1892 |
| Champion<br>Chieftain<br>Chimer<br>Countess | Warbler, 1894 | Constance, 1892 |
| Caprice | Capital, 1893 | Spiteful, 1894 |
| Carver | Badminton Rutland | Crocus, 1892 |
| Finder<br>Flasher<br>Freedom | Warwickshire Warlock | Friendly, 1892 |
| Furrier | Bluster, 1892 | Frolic, 1894 |
| Gallant | Ganymede, 1888 | Terrible, 1893 |
| Gaylad<br>Gracious<br>Governess | Ganymede, 1888 | Negative, 1895 |
| Harbinger<br>Harper<br>Hermit | Quorn Hardwick | Placid, 1893 |
| Nelson<br>Norah<br>Nourish | Badminton Nelson | Honesty, 1893 |
| Paragon<br>President<br>Promise<br>Playful | Warwickshire Tudor | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Prodigal<br>Parody | Ganymede, 1888 | Passion, 1896 |
| Talisman<br>Tarquin | Warwickshire Tancred | Peaceful, 1893 |
| Warwick<br>Warlike | Warwickshire Warlock | Wakeful, 1892 |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1899.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 years old | 2 | couples. |
| 6 „ | 6 | „ |
| 5 „ | 3 | „ |
| 4 „ | 12½ | „ |
| 3 „ | 13½ | „ |
| 2 „ | 10 | „ |
| 1 „ | 17 | „ |
| Total | 64 | „ |
| Old hounds | 47 | „ |
| Young hounds | 17 | „ |

## 1900.

### Seven Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Capital | Warwickshire Fifer | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Dashwood | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Forward | Warwickshire Fullerton | Nosegay, 1887 |
| Hopeful | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |
| Terrible | Carol, 1889 | Termagant, 1886 |
| Warbler | Warwickshire Wildboy | Nimble, 1891 |
| Wonderful | | |
| Warrior | Cheshire Gamester | Wrathful, 1891 |

### Six Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Famous | Quorn Falstaff | Novelty, 1889 |
| Frolic | | |
| Festive | | |
| Spiteful | Highlander, 1892 | Singwell, 1886 |
| Watchful | Cheshire Weaver | Boundless, 1890 |

### Five Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Capable | Quorn Bowman | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Dainty | Oakley Daystar | Patience, 1892 |
| Forager | Forester, 1887 | Science, 1886 |
| Fallacy | | |
| Fleecer | Forester, 1887 | Parasol, 1892 |
| Fervent | | |
| Giddy | Ganymede, 1888 | Agile, 1890 |
| Noble | Gainsboro', 1892 | Nimble, 1891 |
| Novice | | |
| Negative | | |
| Needful | | |
| Passion | Quorn Spartan | Prudence, 1890 |
| Peaceful | | |
| Probity | | |
| Ruler | Roman, 1892 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Redcap | | |
| Rhymer | Roman, 1892 | Pliant, 1893 |
| Rarity | | |
| Rivet | | |
| Stoutness | Forester, 1887 | Symbol, 1892 |
| Surety | | |

### Four Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Alderman<br>Albion<br>Admiral<br>Actress<br>Alma | Brocklesby Acrobat | Wonderful, 1894 |
| Chamberlain | Quorn Spartan | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Crafty<br>Candid | Capital, 1893 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Dryden<br>Druid | Dashwood, 1893 | Constance, 1892 |
| Fairplay<br>Falstaff<br>Fancy<br>Fashion | Ganymede, 1888 | Friendly, 1892 |
| Gaylass | Ganymede, 1888 | Patience, 1893 |
| Handsome | Ganymede, 1888 | Honesty, 1893 |
| Willing<br>Wanton<br>Waspish<br>Woodbine | Ganymede, 1888 | Wakeful, 1892 |

### Three Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Cloister<br>Comedy | Warbler, 1894 | Constance, 1892 |
| Denmark<br>Daffodil<br>Damsel | Gainsboro', 1892 | Destiny, 1893 |
| Gesture<br>Gladys | Gainsboro', 1892 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Hasty | Ganymede, 1888 | Harmony, 1893 |
| Newsman<br>Needy | Warwickshire Nailer | Frolic, 1895 |
| Nightly | Forager, 1896 | Nightwatch, 1896 |
| Saracen | Ganymede, 1888 | Surety, 1895 |
| Timely | Warwickshire Tancred | Symbol, 1892 |

### Two Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Agnes<br>Abbess | Albion, 1897 | Willing, 1897 |
| Bashful | Warwickshire Warlock | Boundless, 1892 |
| Champion<br>Chieftain<br>Chimer<br>Countess | Warbler, 1894 | Constance, 1892 |

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Caprice | Capital, 1893 | Spiteful, 1894 |
| Carver | Badminton Rutland | Crocus, 1892 |
| Finder | Warwickshire Warlock | Friendly, 1892 |
| Flasher | | |
| Gallant | Ganymede, 1888 | Terrible, 1893 |
| Gaylad | Ganymede, 1888 | Negative, 1895 |
| Gracious | | |
| Governess | | |
| Harbinger | Quorn Hardwick | Placid, 1893 |
| Harper | | |
| Hermit | | |
| Norah | Badminton Nelson | Honesty, 1893 |
| Paragon | Warwickshire Tudor | Phrensy, 1893 |
| President | | |
| Promise | | |
| Prodigal | Ganymede, 1888 | Passion, 1896 |
| Parody | | |
| Talisman | Warwickshire Tancred | Peaceful, 1893 |
| Warwick | Warwickshire Warlock | Wakeful, 1892 |
| Warlike | | |

## ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Alice | Albion, 1897 | Placid, 1893 |
| Amity | | |
| Bellman | Capital, 1893 | Boundless, 1892 |
| Bellmaid | | |
| Comrade | Dashwood, 1893 | Clara, 1897 |
| Conqueror | | |
| Courtesy | | |
| Carnival | Alderman, 1897 | Careless, 1893 |
| Dancer | Druid, 1897 | Negative, 1895 |
| Dealer | | |
| Duster | | |
| Derwent | Dexter, 1897 | Honesty, 1893 |
| Gamesome | Alderman, 1897 | Giddy, 1895 |
| Grafton | Gainsboro', 1892 | Frolic, 1894 |
| Hazard | Alderman, 1897 | Hopeful, 1893 |
| Parable | Badminton Paradox | Crocus, 1892 |
| Primrose | Warwickshire Nailer | Peaceful, 1893 |
| Regent | Warwickshire Tuscan | Rarity, 1895 |
| Ringlet | | |
| Templar | Dexter, 1897 | Terrible, 1893 |
| Tidings | Warwickshire Tancred | Patience, 1893 |
| Wisdom | Capital, 1893 | Wakeful, 1892 |
| Welcome | | |

### NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1900.

| | |
|---|---|
| 7 years old | 4½ couples. |
| 6 „ | 2½ „ |
| 5 „ | 10½ „ |
| 4 „ | 10 „ |
| 3 „ | 6½ „ |
| 2 „ | 13½ „ |
| 1 „ | 11½ „ |
| Total | 59 „ |
| Old hounds | 47½ „ |
| Young hounds | 11½ „ |

## 1901.

### EIGHT YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Beauty | North Cheshire Gaylad | Bellmaid, 1887 |
| Dashwood | Belvoir Dryden | Reckless, 1890 |
| Hopeful | Warwickshire Hermit | Prettylass, 1890 |

### SEVEN YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Frolic<br>Festive | Quorn Falstaff | Novelty, 1889 |
| Spiteful | Highlander, 1892 | Singwell, 1886 |

### SIX YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Capable | Quorn Bowman | Cheerful, 1888 |
| Dainty | Oakley Daystar | Patience, 1892 |
| Fallacy | Forester, 1887 | Science, 1886 |
| Fleecer<br>Fervent | Forester, 1887 | Parasol, 1892 |
| Giddy | Ganymede, 1888 | Agile, 1890 |
| Noble<br>Novice<br>Negative<br>Needful | Gainsboro', 1892 | Nimble, 1891 |

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Passion | Quorn Spartan | Prudence, 1890 |
| Probity | | |
| Ruler | Roman, 1892 | Phrensy, 1893 |
| Redcap | | |
| Rhymer | Roman, 1892 | Pliant, 1893 |
| Rarity | | |
| Rivet | | |
| Stoutness | Forester, 1887 | Symbol, 1892 |
| Surety | | |

## Five Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Albion | Brocklesby Acrobat | Wonderful, 1894 |
| Actress | | |
| Alma | | |
| Crafty | Capital, 1893 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Candid | | |
| Druid | Dashwood, 1893 | Constance, 1892 |
| Fairplay | Ganymede, 1888 | Friendly, 1892 |
| Falstaff | | |
| Fancy | | |
| Fashion | | |
| Gaylass | Ganymede, 1888 | Patience, 1893 |
| Handsome | Ganymede, 1888 | Honesty, 1893 |
| Willing | Ganymede, 1888 | Wakeful, 1892 |
| Wanton | | |
| Waspish | | |
| Woodbine | | |

## Four Years.

| Name. | Sire. | Dam. |
|---|---|---|
| Cloister | Warbler, 1894 | Constance, 1892 |
| Comedy | | |
| Denmark | Gainsboro', 1892 | Destiny, 1893 |
| Daffodil | | |
| Gladys | Gainsboro', 1892 | Neatness, 1891 |
| Newsman | Warwickshire Nailer | Frolic, 1895 |
| Needy | | |
| Nightly | Forager, 1896 | Nightwatch, 1896 |
| Saracen | Ganymede, 1888 | Surety, 1895 |
| Timely | Warwickshire Tancred | Symbol, 1892 |

## THREE YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Agnes | Albion, 1897 | Willing, 1897 |
| Abbess | | |
| Bashful | Warwickshire Warlock | Boundless, 1892 |
| Chieftain | Warbler, 1894 | Constance, 1892 |
| Chimer | | |
| Countess | | |
| Caprice | Capital, 1893 | Spiteful, 1894 |
| Carver | Badminton Rutland | Crocus, 1892 |
| Finder | Warwickshire Warlock | Friendly, 1892 |
| Flasher | | |
| Gallant | Ganymede, 1888 | Terrible, 1893 |
| Gaylad | Ganymede, 1888 | Negative, 1895 |
| Gracious | | |
| Governess | | |
| Harbinger | Quorn Hardwick | Placid, 1893 |
| Hermit | | |
| Norah | Badminton Nelson | Honesty, 1893 |
| Paragon | Warwickshire Tudor | Phrensy, 1893 |
| President | | |
| Promise | | |
| Parody | Ganymede, 1888 | Passion, 1896 |
| Talisman | Warwickshire Tancred | Peaceful, 1893 |
| Warwick | Warwickshire Warlock | Wakeful, 1892 |
| Warlike | | |

## TWO YEARS.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Alice | Albion, 1897 | Placid, 1893 |
| Amity | | |
| Bellman | Capital, 1893 | Boundless, 1892 |
| Conqueror | Dashwood, 1893 | Clara, 1897 |
| Courtesy | | |
| Carnival | Alderman, 1897 | Careless, 1893 |
| Dancer | Druid, 1897 | Negative, 1895 |
| Dealer | | |
| Duster | | |
| Derwent | Dexter, 1897 | Honesty, 1893 |
| Gamesome | Alderman, 1897 | Giddy, 1895 |
| Grafton | Gainsboro', 1892 | Frolic, 1894 |
| Hazard | Alderman, 1897 | Hopeful, 1893 |
| Parable | Badminton Paradox | Crocus, 1892 |
| Primrose | Warwickshire Nailer | Peaceful, 1893 |
| Regent | Warwickshire Tuscan | Rarity, 1895 |
| Ringlet | | |
| Templar | Dexter, 1897 | Terrible, 1893 |
| Tidings | Warwickshire Tancred | Patience, 1893 |
| Wisdom | Capital, 1893 | Wakeful, 1892 |
| Welcome | | |
| Playful | Alderman | Pastime |

## ONE YEAR.

| NAME. | SIRE. | DAM. |
|---|---|---|
| Ardent | Cheshire Nailer | Actress, 1896 |
| Comus<br>Careful<br>Careless | Flasher, 1898 | Clara, 1897 |
| Danger | Dexter, 1897 | Capable, 1895 |
| Factor | Cheshire Trifler | Festive, 1895 |
| Gravity | Alderman, 1897 | Giddy, 1895 |
| Nimrod<br>Nominal<br>Notice<br>Novelty | Newsman, 1898 | Negative, 1895 |
| Rector<br>Rapture<br>Rapid | Cheshire Prodigal | Redcap, 1895 |
| Sportsman | Cheshire Seaman | Frolic, 1895 |
| Trueman | Cheshire Trimbush | Candid, 1896 |
| Woldsman<br>Winifred<br>Whimsey | Newsman, 1898 | Willing, 1896 |
| Pleasant | Cloister, 1898 | Probity, 1896 |

## NUMBER OF HOUNDS, 1901.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8 years old | 1½ | couples. |
| 7 ,, | 1½ | ,, |
| 6 ,, | 9½ | ,, |
| 5 ,, | 8 | ,, |
| 4 ,, | 5 | ,, |
| 3 ,, | 12 | ,, |
| 2 ,, | 11 | ,, |
| 1 ,, | 10 | ,, |
| Total | 58½ | ,, |
| Old hounds | 48½ | ,, |
| Young hounds | 10 | ,, |

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